

The Role of Fan-Subtitle Groups in the Process of Introducing

US Television Programs Into China: A Case Study

A Thesis

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Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to:

- My grandmother and grandfather, who have always loved and supported me unconditionally, may joy and health always be with you,
- My mother, who has been a constant source of support during the challenges of graduate school and life in America.
- My father, who has been providing me with financial and psychological support all the time.

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ABSTRACT

The Role of Fan-Subtitle Groups in the Process of Introducing US Television Programs Into China: A Case Study Yiwei Gao

Television programs as an important cultural carrier have played a significant role in cross-cultural communication between China and the United States. This thesis will first focus on the television products that have been used as a bridge in cross-cultural communication. It will then discuss the different stages of the introduction of US television programs in China, especially the current stage - Fansub groups.

This study gathers data through personal interviews and an online survey. The survey was conducted online, through multiple Chinese social media. The researcher used Chinese online questionnaire software “Wenjuan Wang” to collect data and organize the information.

The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of Fansub groups on the Chinese television industry and society. This research aims to explore both the status quo of Fansub groups as they exist on the edge of the legitimate business world and the impact of their work as a carrier of cross-cultural communication in Chinese society. Therefore, this study hopes to illuminate the areas where Fansub groups may potentially become a legitimate player in the market.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Since Chinese economic reform of 1978, when China started to open to the outside world, communications between China and western countries, such as the US and Britain, became more frequent (Dahlman and Aubert, 2005). After China established diplomatic relations with the United States in 1979, cross-cultural communication between China and the US began to accelerate. The importation of American television programs became an important channel for cross-cultural communication between China and the US, because television programs are a very powerful cultural carrier that can cause enormous social impact. For example, *Garrison's Gorillas*, an ABC television series broadcast in 1967 and introduced into China in 1980, was accused of being responsible for the “crackdown on crime” in China in August 1983 (Wang, 2008). After the crackdown on crime launched, thousands of people were arrested and many were executed (Abrams, 1987). As of 2018, Fansub groups were the most common channel for Chinese people to get access to foreign television series'. Fansub groups contain people who translate and subtitle foreign films or foreign television programs on their own; the process is called Fansubbing and the people involved are called Fansubbers.

This thesis examines the topic from three dimensions, macro, medium, and micro. The macro level aims to deconstruct this topic from a communication and sociological perspective; the medium level refers to the analysis of specific channels used in this cross-cultural communication procedure; the micro level refers to one channel: the Fansub group.

At the macro level, this thesis discusses cross-cultural communication between the US and China, especially through the vehicle of television programs. Television, movies and other audiovisual products contain significant information in their content. People from different regions, different ethnic groups, and different countries are consuming those products, and will be influenced by the culture and ideology inherent in those audiovisual products, most of the time, subconsciously. These influences can be felt by Chinese people, across the Chinese television industry and Chinese society. This feature makes television and film products become a very important carrier for cultural communication, and also an important weapon for ideological propaganda (Ma, 2014).

On the medium level, the effects caused by different approaches during cross-cultural communication is an area that lacks deep study. What channels exist for the introduction of television and film products? How do these channels evolve through time, and what are the effects at each stage and for each channel?

The micro level will mainly focus on one specific importation channel of US television programs in China called “Fansub.” Fan-subtitled (Fansub) content is a version of a foreign film or foreign television program that has been translated and subtitled into another language by fans, which means it has not been officially licensed and not done by a professional translator. The process is called Fansubbing and the people involved are called Fansubbers. Fansubbers typically form groups and divide the work. To understand “Fansubbing,” it is necessary to understand the timeline of its development, the stakeholders, its procedures, and its business model. Is it a non-profit organization? Is it illegal?

This thesis will be organized based on these three dimensions, from macro to micro, and then from micro to macro. The principle research questions include:

RQ1: What are the roles different channels played in cross-cultural communication between China and the United States?

RQ2: How do these channels affect the result of cross-cultural communication?

Both of these questions will be examined via thorough research specifically focused on Fansub groups. Additionally, the role of other sectors and some inevitable “noise” in the environment; policies, ideologies, international relations, and influential people’s personal preferences will be examined. All of these factors will increase the uncertainty of the evolution of cross-cultural communication channels and its impact.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

There are three main areas that are most relevant to the research problem.

The first area examines the roles that television and other audiovisual products play in cross-cultural communication. In order for this to be achieved, an understanding of “cross-cultural communication” is necessary. Cross-cultural communication focuses on how individuals or organizations from differing cultural backgrounds communicate with each other. With an increase in global trade, it is unavoidable that different cultures will meet, come into conflict, and blend together (“Cross Cultural”). In this thesis, the author will mainly discuss how American audiovisual products are received, interpreted and perhaps reinscribed with new meanings by Chinese consumers/audiences.

Audiovisual products refer to television programs but also includes film, documentary, and other products that contain both “audio” and “visual” elements.

Second, is the emergence of Fansub groups. When and why did they emerge, where did they first appear, and what is their social background? Understanding these questions will provide a clear recognition of Fansub activity. After an understanding of the definition and background of Fansub groups, this thesis will examine working procedures. This includes the people involved, the techniques being used, the sources of raw video, and how this media is distributed to its consumers.

The third area is the social and cross-cultural communications impact caused by the Fansub activities. Whereas the first two areas explore the impact of Chinese Fansub groups on the Chinese film industry and audiences, in this area the thesis will explore the future of the Fansub phenomenon, and the potential for developing partnerships between the underground Fansub industry and Chinese television media companies.

In conclusion, this thesis will begin with cross-cultural communication between China and the US, focusing on the audiovisual products that have been used as a bridge in the communication. Then it will discuss the evolving stages of the introduction of US television programs in China, especially the current stage - Fansub groups; their histories, backgrounds, their working processes, and their impact on Chinese viewers, Chinese society and the Chinese television industry. Finally, this thesis will provide insights about possible future directions for Fansub groups in China.

1.2 Background and Need

The year 2017 might have been the worst time ever for US television programs to enter China, due to the implementation of the “Circular of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television on Further Implementing the Relevant

Provisions on the Administration of Online Foreign Films and Teleplays”. As of 2014, all foreign television programs were to be reviewed by SAPPRFT (State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television) before distribution to Chinese audiences (“Circular Of”, 2014). Then, abruptly on July 12th, 2017, all foreign television and film programs (both authorized and unauthorized) vanished on Bilibili, AcFun and other streaming services. After the Chinese streaming service iQiyi and Netflix announced authorized cooperation (Tartaglione, 2017), iQiyi was granted the right to air *BoJack Horseman* on their website, but it only lasted for two days. No explanation emerged as to why the animated series disappeared.

The first area of research in this thesis is the role television and other audiovisual products play in cross-cultural communication, and why they can influence society. The concept of “cross-cultural communication” was coined by American anthropologist Edward Hall in the 1950s. In his book “*The Hidden Dimension*,” Hall argued that people are being affected by the space between people (proxemics) at an unconscious level (Hall, 1966). Television programs carry cultural and ideological elements in their formation and content, and have a profound influence on the Chinese television industry and Chinese people’s lives. For example, some words in US series have become buzzwords after translation into Chinese, while certain characters’ wardrobe and lifestyles have been imitated by audiences. As for the Chinese television industry, some changed their broadcast schedule from daily to weekly, developed new shooting methods learned from Hollywood studios, and expanded the scope of themes found in Chinese television dramas (Sun, 2014).

Despite continuous development of the internet, language is still a barrier to cultural understanding. Under current circumstances, a Fansub group seems to be the only channel for Chinese audiences to consume foreign television programs.

The second problem is the emergence of Fansub groups. The history of Fansubbing can be traced to 1975 with the introduction of the VCR (Video Cassette Recorder) in the US. The very first Fansub group was C/FO, established by fans of Japanese animation in the US (Leonard, 2005). As for China, the first Fansub group was also established for the translation of Japanese animation, and was followed by the rise of American television series' and English-learning fever in the 21st century US television Fansub groups became the mainstream (Yan & Chen, 2016).

The third area is the social and cross-cultural communication impact caused by Fansub activities. A research gap exists here; no research has put the "Fansub" phenomenon into the social and political background to discuss why it emerged and what were the consequences, nor its impact on audiences and the Chinese television industry.

In summary, television programs as an important cultural carrier have played a significant role in cross-cultural communication between China and the US. As time passes, the channels used to introduce American television programs continue to change. Research has been conducted examining cross-cultural communication between China and the US, the history of US television programs entering the Chinese market, the history of Fansub groups, and the workflow of Chinese Fansub groups. Research gaps still exist. First, there have been no evaluations of US television programs' effects on cross-cultural communication. Second, while there is research on the workflow of Fansub groups, the influence of their work on the television industry and audiences have also not

been quantified. Finally, the reasons for the emergence of Fansub groups and its relationship to English learning fever haven't been closely studied. Those are the research gaps that the author intends to fill with this thesis.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to comprehensively study the emergence and development of Fansub groups to understand the cross-cultural influences caused by Fansubbing on the Chinese television industry and impact on the Chinese audience.

- (a) **Need/rationale for the study:** Since 2015, the introduction of foreign television programs on official platforms has become rare (*Circular of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television on Further Implementing the Relevant Provisions on the Administration of Overseas Television and Television Plans*, 2015). The rise of Fansub groups provides an alternative way for Chinese audiences to consume American television programs. However, few research studies have defined and recognized the role of Fansub groups, and much less to show the influence these groups have had on Chinese society and the television industry.
- (b) **Description of the study:** This study seeks to understand the importance of Fansub groups as a medium for cross-cultural communication between China and the US. Using a survey and a series of personal interviews, the researcher built a case study around a specific Chinese Fansub group, documenting their daily work routine, the source of their content, their production processes, and ultimately their distribution channels.

(c) **Expected Outcomes:** The purpose of the study was to explore the impact of Fansub groups on the Chinese television industry and society. By studying the evolution of imported channels of foreign television programming, paying specific attention to Fansub groups, this research explored both the lived realities of Fansub groups as they exist in the margins of the legitimate business world and the impact that their work has as a vehicle of cross cultural communication in Chinese society. As such, this study hopes to illuminate the areas where Fansub groups could potentially emerge as legitimate participants in the market.

1.4 Research Questions

This research will focus on Fansub groups, uncover the causes of their emergence, examine their history, analyze their organizational structure and specific production processes, and from a legal perspective, further discuss whether it constitutes infringement of intellectual property, and its impact on the Chinese television industry. In addition, the thesis will examine the history of the spread of US television programs in China, and corresponding policy evolution. This thesis contains three main hypotheses:

H1: US television programs will continue to spread in China and have a significant impact on the Chinese television industry.

RQ 1: What programs are likely to provide revenue and growth opportunities?

RQ 2: Should these trends continue; how will they influence the industry standards of Chinese television?

H2: Fansub groups will play a positive role in the spread of US television programs.

RQ 1: In what ways will the Fansub industry contribute to the growth of the Chinese television industry?

H3: Fansub programs will shift from the underground to the mainstream market.

RQ 1: What are the legalities surrounding the fansub industry as it currently exists? (Sub question 1: Is subtitling a crime unto itself? 2: To what extent are fansub groups complementing pre-existing online media piracy groups by creating subtitles for Chinese audiences? 3: To what extent are the agents involved in piracy the same agents involved in fansubbing?)

RQ 2: What factors will enable Fansub groups to transition to a regulated industry that is ancillary to the Chinese television industry (Fansub group's background, future industry policies, etc.)?

1.5 Significance to the Field

A great part of the cultural impact between China and the United States is owed to US television programs and Hollywood movies. For example, in 2005, *Prison Break* became one of the first US television shows consumed by Chinese audiences, marking a milestone in the evolution of American television series' in China ("Last Season", 2017). Its anti-establishment themes and its narrative form were unheard of in domestic Chinese programs which previously had not featured seasonal programming or an "anti-hero" type protagonist. The show *Friends* became the best program for the Chinese audience to learn about ordinary people's lives in the United States.

When "review first" censorship and limitations on the number of US television programs to be introduced came into force, it caused a great impact on the spread of US

series. The discussion of this phenomenon is of great significance, as it will help the industry understand the impact of these policies on the television industry, and help television industry participants learn how to change their role in the new era and achieve success under the new industry circumstance.

1.6 Definitions

- (a) **Cross-cultural communication:** Cross-cultural communication focuses on how individuals or organizations from differing cultural backgrounds communicate with each other. With the increase in global trade, it is unavoidable that different cultures will meet, conflict, and blend together (Cross Cultural Communication, n.d.).
- (b) ***Garrison's Gorillas*:** An ABC television series broadcast in 1967 and introduced into China in 1980 (Kops & Ollig, 2007).
- (c) **Audiovisual products:** Refers to television programs, but also includes film, documentary, and other products that contain both “audio” and “visual” elements.
- (d) **Fan-subtitled group (Fansub):** A Fansub is a version of a foreign film or foreign television program that has been translated and subtitled into a language other than that of the original by fans, which means it has not been officially licensed and not done by professional translators. The process is called Fansubbing and the people involved are called Fansubbers. Fansubbers typically form groups and divide the work.

- (e) **Cultural carriers:** Cultural carriers are vehicles of meanings that can project a specific ethnic or regional culture. Cultural carriers can be objects, political figures, practices, and concepts that preserve or “carry” certain normative meanings over time (Warren & Moghaddam, 2011). In this thesis, the cultural carrier mostly refers to television and film content.
- (f) **Streaming services:** Streaming services refer to an online provider of movie, music, teleplays, etc. that provide content via internet to its viewers (“Streaming Service”, 2017). Some well-known streaming services in China include Sohu, iQiyi, Youku Tudou, Bilibili, AcFun and Tencent video.
- (g) **State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (“SAPPRFT”):** SAPPRFT’s role is comparable to the FCC in the US, but has more responsibilities. SAPPRFT consists of two former departments: GAPP (General Administration of Press and Publication) and SARFT (State Administration of Radio, Film and Television). It is an executive branch under the State Council of the People's Republic of China. Its main task is the administration and supervision of state-owned enterprises engaged in the television, radio, and film industries; controls state-owned enterprises at the national level such as China Central Television, China National Radio, China Radio International, as well as other movie and television studios and other non-business organizations. It is also responsible for censoring any materials that offend the sensibilities of the Chinese government or Chinese cultural standards (“Main Responsibilities”, 2013).

- (h) **TOEFL:** The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities, “recognized by more than 10,000 colleges, universities and agencies in more than 130 countries” (Educational Testing Service).
- (i) **English-learning fever:** The English-learning fever refers to the universal English-learning phenomenon in China since 1981. In 1981, the State Council promulgated the “Interim Provisions on Study Abroad Individually,” Learning TOEFL and studying abroad became popular in China (“Interim Provisions” 1981). In 1984, English was officially included in the College Entrance Examination (Cai, 2009). By the 1990s, numerous forms of English language learning had emerged in China, leading to an increase in English language learners by the turn of the 21st century.
- (j) **CC (Closed captioning) subtitles:** CC subtitles are English subtitles, provided by production companies in order to help hearing-impaired people and provide additional or interpretive information (Tian, 2011).
- (k) **CET 4 and CET 6:** The College English Test (CET) is a national English language test in China. CET is used to evaluate the English proficiency of undergraduate and graduate students in China and ensure they meet the English language requirements from the National College English Syllabus (NCETS) (Zhang & Cheng, 2008).
- (l) **Higher vocational colleges (College degree):** Higher vocational colleges consist of education in vocational schools and vocational training, students

from higher vocational colleges (full-time and part-time) will receive a college degree instead of a bachelor's degree after they graduated. (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2006).

(m) MP4, HDTV, 720P, 1080P, and WEB-DL: MP4, HDTV, 720P, 1080P, and WEB-DL are 5 different video formats that used by Fansub groups to distribute their Fansub products. WEB-DL has the highest resolution among these five formats, 1080P ranks second, 720P ranks third, HDTV ranks fourth, MP4 has the lowest resolution. Higher video resolution requires higher internet speed.

1.7 Limitations

In light of the political background (“Circular of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television on Further Implementing the Relevant Provisions on the Administration of Overseas Television and Television Plans” in 2015), the author uses the theories of communication, sociology and management to explain the roles and functions of Fansub groups and television programs in the cross-cultural communication exercise between China and the US. However, there are limitations to this research. First, few existing research results are available. There are few studies on Fansub groups domestically and abroad, and the majority of existing research only touched the surface but has not discussed fansubbing groups in depth. Secondly, because the policies surrounding the importation of US television series in China is subject to sudden change, the accuracy of the forecasting of future development and direction of Fansub groups is difficult to be guaranteed; last but not least, this thesis does not involve the introduction

of foreign Fansub groups on the Chinese cultural product, lacking two-way comparison of the structure and effect of Fansub groups.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed the Institutional Review Board process for informed consent, obtain necessary permissions before conducting any survey and personal interviews with people who work in Fansub groups; their statements will be presented in the thesis only after informed consent of those who are interviewed.

Considering the generally secretive behavior of Fansub groups, they prefer to remain distant from the mainstream, working within vague legal boundaries in order to minimize the potential risks to participants; the researcher hereby declares that this thesis will not divulge any personal information without consent, and all the statements made by participants during personal interviews only represent themselves.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This thesis focuses on cross-cultural communication between China and the United States through television programs. Television, movies and other audio-visual products contain significant information. While people consume television products, the ideology and information that are inherent in the television products also affect the viewer, and most of the time this process happens unconsciously (Shapiro & Lang, 1991). "Fansub Groups" play an important role in helping to expand the impact of American television programs in China and its scope of influences including the Chinese viewer, society and the Chinese television industry.

The literature review will address three areas of research related to the cross-cultural communication impact on Chinese viewers and Chinese television industry caused by US television programs and Fansub groups. The first section is related to the history of the spread of US television programs in China. In the second section, this literature review will study the emergence of the Fansub group, and the historical background of Fansub organizations. The last section will focus on the role Fansub groups play in 2018 and the various (industrial, social) impacts caused by Fansub groups.

2.2 The history of the spread of US television programs in China

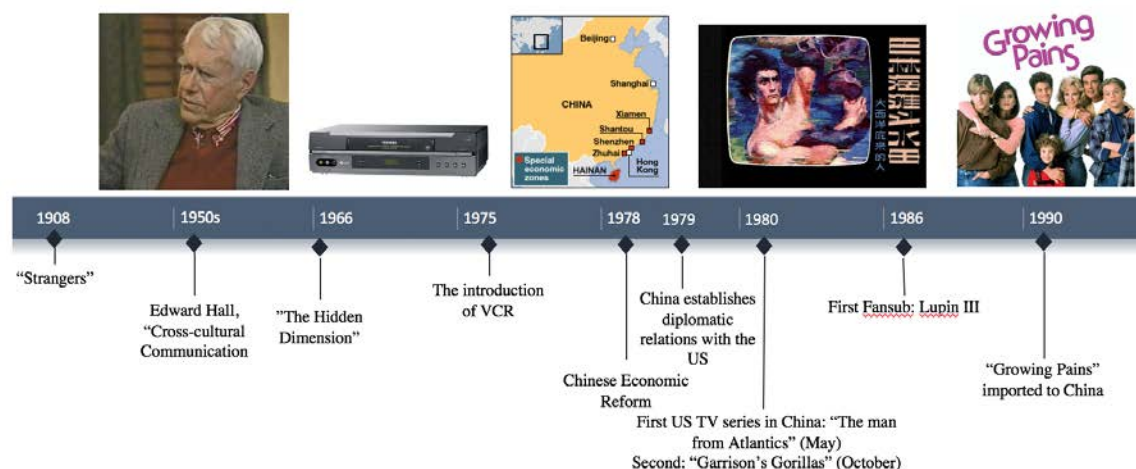


Figure 1. The History of Fansub Groups. Part I

The study of cross-cultural communication can be traced to 1908, when Georg Simmel brought forth the concept of "Strangers" (Simmel, 1908). American anthropologist Edward Hall established cross-cultural communication studies in the 1950s. During his career, Hall offered many new communication and anthropology concepts, including proxemics, polychronic and monochronic time, and high and low context culture. In his book "The Hidden Dimension" (1966), Hall argued that people are being affected by the space between people (proxemics) at an unconscious level; different cultural frameworks can define and organize that space and can lead to a serious failure in communication and understanding in a cross-cultural practice (Hall, 1966).

2.2.1 English-learning Fever: The “Learning & Consuming” feedback loop

Just like “the chicken or the egg” causality dilemma, researchers have different opinions about the causal relationship between the upsurge of English-learning and the introduction of American television programs. But no matter which occurred first, there is no doubt that these two factors promote each other under the macro-control of government policy.

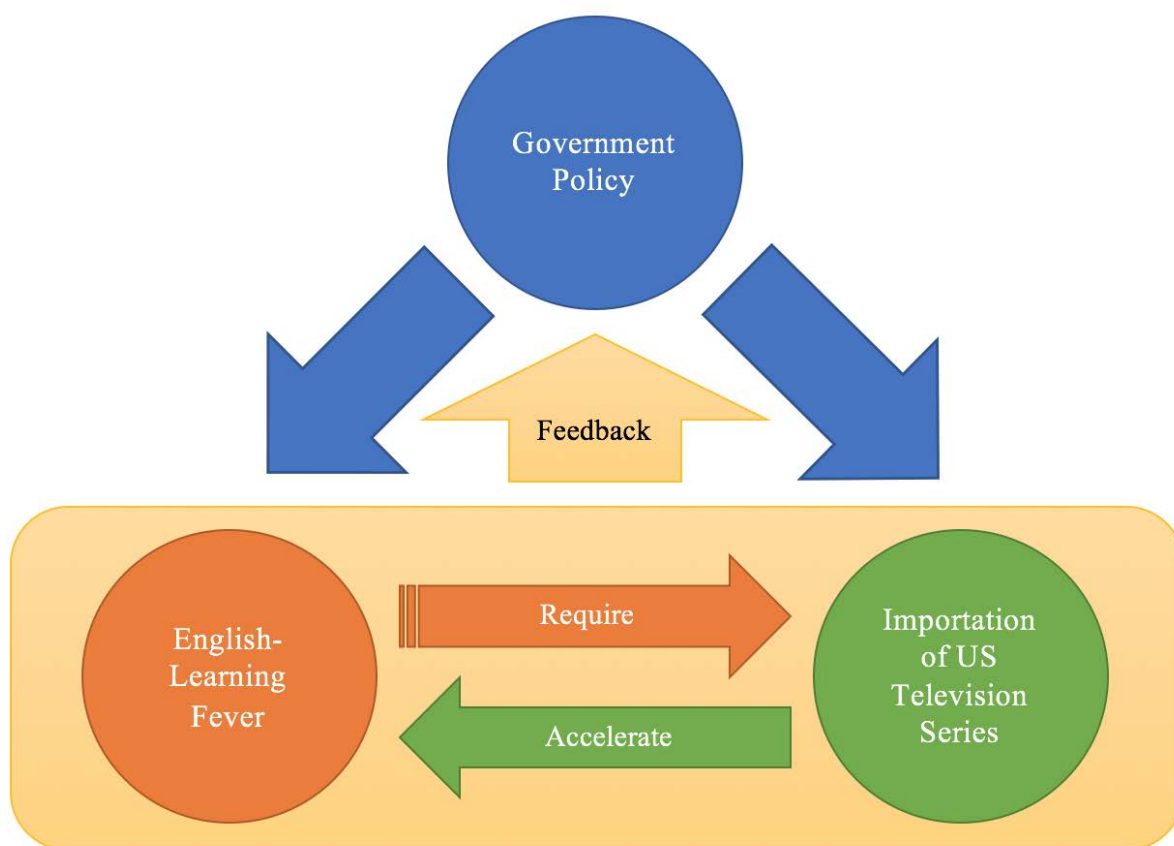


Figure 2. The “Learning & Consuming” feedback loop

The very first policy implementation concerning English-learning nationwide in Communist China occurred in October 1964, when the Chinese Ministry of Education formulated the “Seven-Year Plan for Foreign Language Education.” In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the deterioration of the relationship between the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union caused the “Sino–Soviet split” (Luthi, 2010). Under the instructions from the “Seven-Year Plan for Foreign Language Education,” English replaced Russian as the Chinese second language of choice (Sohu Education, 2014).

However, in 1966, the Cultural Revolution temporarily chilled Chinese enthusiasm for English language education (Tsou, 1986). Nonetheless, when the Cultural Revolution ended in 1977, the College Entrance Examination was restored, complete with its English language requirements. In subsequent years, English scores in the examination continued to increase by 10% every year. In 1981, the State Council promulgated the “Interim Provisions on Study Abroad for Individuals,” which showed that Chinese government policy was increasingly supportive of the various means that a Chinese citizen could undertake to learn English (“Interim Provisions,” 1984). By 1984, English was officially included in the subjects on the college entrance examination (Cai, 2009). During this same time period, *Garrison’s Gorillas*, and *Man From Atlantis* were introduced to Chinese audiences (Wang, 2008).

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, both English-learning fever and American television products reached peak consumption in China. Many English learning methods were proposed, such as Reverse English, Four Rounds of Learning, Two-way English, Crazy English Learning, etc., and some famous English teachers even achieved a kind of pop star status (Cai, 2009). At this time, some popular American

television series like *Friends* and *Growing Pains* also entered the Chinese market through central and local television stations. Crucially, the popularity of *Friends* is the reason why China's first Fansub group was established (Tian, 2011). The American lifestyle exhibited in *Friends* inspired China's well-educated class to study abroad, at the same time the straightforward and down-to-earth dialogue in this show became excellent teaching material for Chinese English learners.

In conclusion, under a stable and open policy, English-learning fever and the introduction of US television programs complemented promoted each other. The major variable factor was the government's preference and policies. In the past 40 years, with the changes of government policies and the development of science and technology, the channels for American television programs to enter China have changed continuously. In the next section, the four different stages of the importation of U.S. Television programs will be summarized and discussed.

2.2.2 The Different Stages of China's introduction of US television series

The 1980s: The CCTV Era

At first, all introduction was done by official Chinese television stations. After the Chinese economic reform of 1978, China started to open to the outside world (Dahlman & Aubert, 2005); in 1979, China establishes diplomatic relations with the United States that makes it possible for China and the US to communicate in the cultural industry. In May 1980, *The Man from Atlantis* became the first US television drama to be being broadcast on China's television stations ("China buys 'Atlantis' TV Show," 1979). This

show caused a huge sensation in China; the main character's sunglasses became a popular trend.

China Central Television (CCTV) imported the second US television drama, *Garrison's Gorillas*, in October, 1980. However, CCTV announced that this television series was over after broadcasting only 16 episodes. Many viewers wrote letters to CCTV which became a historical event in the history of CCTV. The reason for the cancellation, revealed many years later, was that this show was a pure entertainment series full of tussles and mischievousness, and without artistic value (Wang, 2008). Government officials and authority figures in general came to view the show as having a negative influence on the youth, attributing to the show the crime wave that led to the Crackdown in China of 1983 (Wang, 2008).

Having those two US TV series as precedence, the following imported show *Hunter* (NBC) exploded in popularity. The well-known line, "you have the right to remain silent and refuse to answer questions, anything you say may be used against you in a court of law"; The Miranda warnings that all American police officers are required to recite spread widely with this teleplay (Ding, 2003).

The 1990s: The Local Station/DVD Era

In 1990, *Growing Pains* was introduced and translated by Shanghai Television (Cheng, 2016). It soon became a classic teleplay among people who were born in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1995, Hong Kong English-Language Pearl Television imported the classic situation comedy *Friends*. With the great mass fervor of English learning as well as the popularity of pirated DVDs at that time, starting from the coastal regions in

Guangdong, the earliest group of US television program fans soon appeared countrywide, and with the popularity of the internet, US television program discussion communities and fansub groups also began to appear.

The 2000's: The Fansub (Piracy) Era

Some of the classic US television programs such as *The X Files*, *Friends* and *Seinfeld* became popular in China during the 1990's, but the awareness and popularity of American television programs was limited to a small group of audiences until the 2000's. Prior to then, US television programs remained as a niche product. The real blowout period of US TV dramas in China emerged after 2000. Due to the rapid advancements in internet technologies, synchronous updates of US television programs in China became possible. The image quality improved significantly. US television chat rooms, forums and Fansub groups made significant contributions to the popularity of US television dramas. In 2005, *Prison Break* successfully brought US television dramas to mainstream culture from its previous minority audience group. After *Prison Break*, US television series became a strong power that could not be overlooked in China's television market (Sun, 2014).

2010-2015: The Streaming Services Era

Since the beginning of 2010, a large number of domestic websites in China began to legitimately import US television programs. With the advent of these changes, it seemed as though the era of piracy would quickly draw to a close. Watching US television programs became a representation of elite culture (Sun, 2014). Although the

copyright of American television programs was expensive, growing demands from Chinese audiences formed a very promising market.

2015-2018: Back to The Fansub Era

In September 2, 2014, SAPPRFT issued “*The Notice of Further Implementation of the Online Foreign Film and Television Play Administrative Regulations*”, stating that “from April 1, 2015, all unregistered foreign films and television programs cannot be played on the internet,” (SAPPRFT, 2014). The Notice posed limitations on the number, content, and duration of imported foreign films and television programs, and all film and television productions were subject to a “Reviewed First, Broadcast Later” process by the SAPPRFT. This meant that the task of ensuring that Chinese audiences could stay abreast of US television releases would fall once again on the shoulders of Fansub translation groups. All the major streaming websites terminated most of the simultaneous updates of American television programs, and Fansub groups once again became the main source for Chinese audiences to consume US television products (Li, 2014).

2.2.3 The Impact of US Television Programs in China

Social Impact: US television programs have a far-reaching effect on cross-cultural communication of U.S. Television programs in China under today’s social environment. There is great impact of US television series on Chinese society from the previous example of *Garrison’s Gorillas*. A single foreign television show can cause significant social unrest.

Television Industry Impact: With the popularity of US television programs, remaking US teleplays became a popular strategy in the Chinese television industry. Following is a comparison chart of original American television series and their Chinese versions:

Comparison of US TV Dramas and China's Versions	
Original Version of US TV Dramas:	Chinese Version:
<i>Growing Pains (ABC)</i>	<i>Home With Kids</i> (Chinese: 家有儿女; pinyin: <i>Jia You Er Nv</i> ;))
<i>Friends (NBC)</i>	<i>iPartment</i> (Chinese: 爱情公寓; pinyin: <i>Ai Qing Gong Yu</i> ;))
<i>Prison Break (Fox)</i>	<i>Prison in the Far East</i> (Chinese: 远东第一监狱; pinyin: <i>Yuan Dong Di Yi Jian Yu</i> ;))
<i>Lost (ABC)</i>	<i>Deadend Heaven</i> (Chinese: 末路天堂; pinyin: <i>Mo Lu Tian Tang</i> ;))

<i>Band of Brothers (HBO)</i>	<i>Far East Task Force</i> (Chinese: 远东特遣队; pinyin: <i>Yuan Dong Te Qian Dui</i> ;))
<i>Ugly Betty (ABC)</i>	<i>Invincible Ugly Girl</i> (Chinese: 丑女无敌; pinyin: <i>Chou Nv Wu Di</i> ;))
<i>ER (NBC)</i>	<i>Vigorous Life</i> (Chinese: 无限生机; pinyin: <i>Wu Xian Sheng Ji</i> ;))
<i>Sex and the City (HBO)</i>	<i>Really want to fall in love</i> (Chinese: 好想好想谈恋爱; pinyin: <i>Hao Xiang Hao Xiang Tan Lian Ai</i> ;))
<i>Desperate Housewives (ABC)</i>	<i>You are My Happiness</i> (Chinese: 你是我的幸福; pinyin: <i>Ni Shi Wo De Xing Fu</i> ;)), <i>Beautiful Housewives</i> (Chinese: 美丽主妇; pinyin: <i>Mei Li Zhu Fu</i> ;))
<i>CSI (CBS)</i>	<i>Eighth Sense</i> (Chinese: 第八感; pinyin: <i>Di Ba Gan</i> ;)),

	<i>Scene of Death</i> (Chinese: 死亡现场; pinyin: <i>Si Wang Xian Chang</i> ;)
24 (<i>Fox</i>)	<i>24 Hours of Policing</i> (Chinese: 24 小时警事; pinyin: <i>24 Xiao Shi Jing Shi</i> ;) , <i>24 Hours of Dangers</i> (Chinese: 危情 24 小时; pinyin: <i>Wei Qing 24 Xiao Shi</i> ;)

Table 1. Comparison chart of American and Chinese Television Programs

Political Impact: The series *House of Cards* can serve as a good example of the political influence of American television series on China. *House of Cards* is an American political drama that debuted on the streaming service Netflix. *House of Cards* is one of the most famous American television series in China; its second season reached 29 million views, which means each episode had 2.2 million Chinese viewers (Cendrowski, 2014). One of the reasons for its popularity was that this award-winning political drama had a high level of production, fascinating plot and superb acting skills. Additionally, this show was loved by politicians in China. In an interview with a Hong Kong-based magazine in 2013, Wang Qishan, a senior leader of the Communist Party of China, secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, said he particularly liked Kevin Spacey's character, his duty similar to the "party whip" - to ensuring discipline in the legislature (Zhai, 2013). Chinese Chairman Xi Jinping also talked about

this show: On September 22, 2015, Xi Jinping arrived in Seattle, and spoke about China's anti-corruption process, saying, "In this case, there is no House of Cards" (Perlez, 2015).

There are enough reasons to believe that the controversial second season of *House of Cards* was able to be introduced to Chinese audiences because it was favored by high ranking Chinese politicians. These controversial plots include suspected cyber espionage, a trade war with Washington, and China's dispute with Japan in the South China Sea (Li, 2014). China has very strict censorship practices on the film and television industry. All episodes of the American crime drama "*The Blacklist*" are available on Chinese streaming services, except for the third episode of Season one, because it describes a Chinese spy as a villain who killed the CIA operatives, and criticized China's one-child family planning policy (Evans, 2013). It would seem that *House of Cards* far exceeded this level of controversy, but has nonetheless survived the censorship process. Charles Zhang, the chief executive of Sohu, said that "Many Chinese people - including officials - are watching it now and we have had no problem" (Jiang, 2014). Sohu is one of the largest internet companies in China, whose businesses include media, streaming services, search engines and video games (ZGC Gov, n.d.).

House of Cards also had an influence on the Chinese television industry. In 2017, China's most popular show was "In the Name of People", widely known as the "Chinese version of House of Cards", and has been viewed 350 million times (Raillard, 2017). From these examples, we can get a window on how politics, society, and the television industry are affected by US television programs.

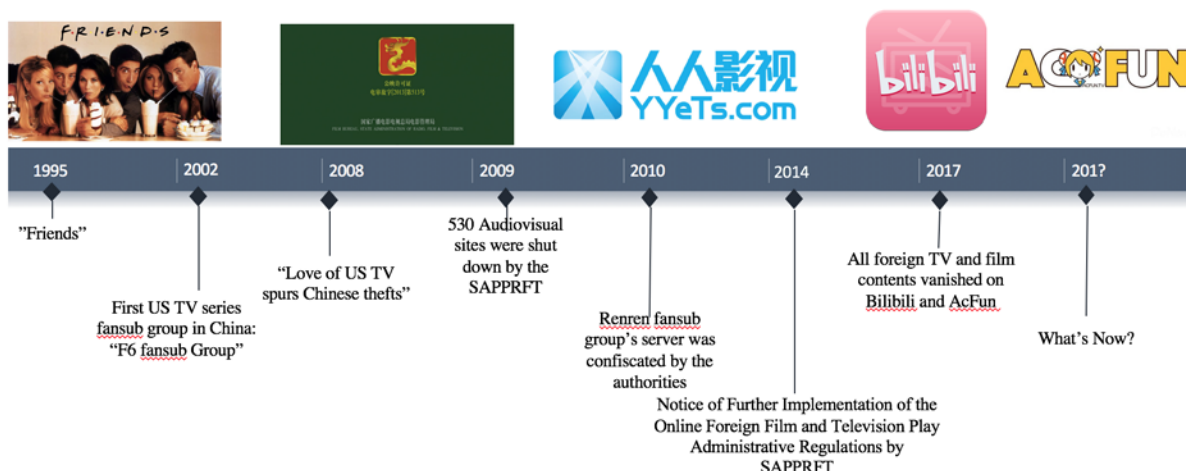


Figure 3. The History of Fansub groups. Part II

As the role of Fansub groups becomes more and more important, the study of Fansub's emergence, development and its working operations become necessary. The history of Fansubbing can be traced to 1975, when the introduction of the VCR gave fans the ability to tape shows and show them to others in America. This technology gave viewers the ability to obtain raw video material. C/FO, which was the first anime club in the United States established by fans, documented the first known Fansub project: a Japanese animation called *Lupin III* in 1986, marked the emergence of Fansubbing (Leonard, 2005). Then next step was the emergence of fan distribution, a process of distributing anime programs on a nationwide underground network of fans. After leaving college, many fans became leaders in the animation industry (Leonard, 2004).

The emergence of Chinese Fansub groups occurred in 2002, when the US television series "*Friends*" entered China. Fans decided to establish the very first US television program subtitle group called "F6 Forum," which then became the "F6 Fansub group." Aside from F6, there was the TLF Fansub group, the YYeTs, Eden Fansub

group, FRM Fansub group, RagBear subtitles group, YouYouNiao Fansub group, SCG, and countless other Fansub groups (Shui, 2011).

2.4 The Role of Fansub groups in 2018

The first time Chinese Fansub groups drew America's attention was on August 8, 2006, when *The New York Times* published an article called “Love of U.S. TV spurs Chinese thefts” (French, 2006). Chinese Fansub groups served as pioneers in breaking the cultural block between China and the U.S. Since then, China Central Television and other mainstream media outlets started paying attention to Fansub groups. Some well-known Chinese newspaper outlets also interviewed Fansub groups (Zheng, 2017; see also “Japanese Media”, 2014; “The Reveal”, 2012). These interviews, which focused on Fansubbing practices, pushed Fansub groups from virtual obscurity in the mind of the public, to emerging as a prime mover in the mainstream Chinese television industry.

Tian Yuan, from Georgetown University, studied the workflow of Chinese Fansub groups, and organized a timeline of a Fansub group's daily routine. Her study used a participant observation method to examine fansubbing activities, distinguishing the differences between Chinese Fansubbing and mainstream audiovisual translation methods. Yuan argues, “This particular cyber community contributes to the process of globalization, which in turn helps to influence and precipitate China's cultural and even political reform” (Tian, 2011, p. iii). Other theses related to the Fansub topic include Douglas Michael Schules' *Anime Fansubs: Translation and Media Engagement as Ludic Practice*, which focused on anime translation and ludology (Schules, 2012), and Anthony Sebastian's *Fansubs for Television Shows and Movies are Illegal, Court Rules* (2017).

Ian Condry's *What Fansubs Reveal about the Copyright Wars* (2010) discussed in detail the legal issues that Fansub groups faced, that the Dutch courts announced that Fansubbing was illegal (Sebastian, 2017). Tiffany Lee's *Fan Activities from P2P File Sharing to Fansubs and Fan Fiction: Motivations, Policy Concerns, and Recommendations*, discussed a range of infringing uses of Japanese media products in the U.S. some of which arguably should be permissible (2013). Edward D. Sherman believes that through the eyes of China and India, America's television industry can help to explore the future of television, identity awareness, and methods of cross-cultural communication, providing a new perspective from which to view American culture (2010). Mandy Zuo analyzes which kind of American television series attracts the largest Chinese audience (2016). Wang Fang explained the similarities and differences between Fansub translations and traditional paper-based translations (2014).

There are several important nodes in the history of Fansub group development. In December 4, 2009, more than 530 audio-visual sites were shut down by the SAPPRFT due to "undocumented posts" ("Chinese Fansub group", 2012); in the second half of 2010, due to copyright issues, YYeTs Fansub group's server was confiscated by the authorities. Many of its users donated money for them to re-purchase the site server, and one month later the site was running again (Teng, 2014).

Fansub groups sought transformation, developing new business models other than simply translating foreign television programs, and looking for opportunities to cooperate with official media platforms. On November 1, 2011, YYeTs Fansub group began working with Netease, a Chinese internet technology company, for their "global elite video open class" online program as a subtitle translation organization (Zhang, 2010).

On July 12th, 2017, all foreign television and film programs (US, UK, Japan, India, Thailand and South Korea) and films (both authorized and unauthorized) vanished on Bilibili, AcFun and other Fansub services. On July 13, those services issued a statement through Weibo, claiming Bilibili services would be conducting a normative review of website content. After they finished the review all suitable and legal film and television programs would gradually resume online, and those in violation of the criteria would be pulled off permanently (Meng, 2017). This action had less to do with stopping piracy than with a desire to tighten the control of information before the China's Nineteenth National Congress (He, 2017). The future of Fansubbing and the importation of American television programs became uncertain.

With the development and growth of Fansub groups, piracy problems in China became more serious. Data from Excipio, a piracy-tracking firm identified the top five pirating countries; China, Australia, Greece, Poland, and India (Kulkarni, 2015; Spangler, 2015). On October 27, 2014, YYeTs Fansub group was named by the Motion Picture Association of America in a worldwide survey of audiovisual piracy organizations (Lieberman, 2014).

2.5 Summary

The existing research on the history of the spread of US television programs in China is very rich and comprehensive. Social impact in China was caused by the spread of US TV series being recorded. This thesis will connect and analyze the impact through a chronological method and relate the event to its impact. The existing research about the emergence of Fansub groups is mainly focused on anime translation and US.-Japan

Fansub groups. While some of them did discuss the intercommunication between China and the U.S. television industry, they did not adapt to the newest regulations and underestimated the Fansub group's value to a certain degree. While research on the social and cross-cultural communication impact caused by Fansub activities is limited, the limited data has nonetheless led to many insights. It has illustrated the structure and workflow of Fansub groups. This research will fill this gap, concentrating on cross-cultural communication between China and the United States through television programs in the context of historical and political circumstances, focusing on the role Fansub groups played in the television industry, and discuss whether positive or negative influences are generated during the process.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This thesis examines cross-cultural communication between the US and China through the medium of television. While people are consuming television content, they are also influenced by the culture and ideology carried by the audiovisual products, most of the time, unconsciously. “Fansub groups” play a significant role during that process, driving the expansion of influences of US television programs on Chinese viewers, the Chinese television industry and Chinese society.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What is the structure and production process of Fansub groups?
2. What is the role of Fansub groups in the spread of US television programs in China?

Is it positive or negative?

3. Do Fansub groups’ work violate the law?
4. What is the future direction of Fansub groups? Will they disappear?

This qualitative case study examines the cross-cultural impact caused by television programs through different channels, especially Fansub groups, from the US to Chinese audiences and the Chinese television industry. Interviews and surveys were utilized to collect data to study the structure of Fansub group with the primary goal of revealing the influence of Fansub groups.

3.2 Setting

The survey was distributed through multiple Chinese social media, such as Weibo, WeChat, QQ and RenRen. The survey examined the behavior and preference of the users of Fansub groups. The personal interviews were carried out separately with each group of participants, providing different questions for the representation of each corresponding group, and then comparing the feedback horizontally. The candidates for personal interviews were chosen from several well-known Fansub group web communities; the television series they have produced include *Game of Throne*, *House of Cards*, *Breaking Bad* and hundreds of other television series, not only American, but also television series from South Korea, Thailand, England and other countries.

3.3 Participants

The sampling procedures used by the researcher in this thesis were convenience sampling and purposive sampling. The target respondents for the survey were Fansub users, highly-educated students and American television series fans. The total response to the survey was 1601, of which 1576 were valid. The respondents were composed mainly of three groups of people: undergraduate and graduate students from Northwest University and Eurasia University, Xi'an, China; One state-owned enterprise in Xi'an, China and one privately-owned enterprise in Shenzhen, China (their names cannot be disclosed) and other random respondents reached through Weibo, WeChat and other social media platforms.

The participants for the personal interview were restricted to those participating in Fansub web communities for at least 3 months, and willing to take part in the study.

Specifically, participants included two high-school students, three college students, and one white-collar worker. The participants were also selected because they were active members of their online communities and have experience in creating subtitles; all have strong representation of their groups.

The researcher had intended to interview more people from different Fansub groups and different backgrounds to study the differences between multiple Fansub group cultures. However, due to the ambiguous legal language addressing Fansub practices, most Fansubbers and Fansub groups prefer to keep a low-profile to the public, avoiding government's attention. Therefore, the safest choice was to decline any personal interview, which made it difficult to find appropriate respondents for this study. This is the reason why the researcher chose convenience sampling and purposive sampling to conduct this research.

3.4 Measurement Instruments

The researcher used survey and personal interviews to collect data.

The purpose of the survey was to find out whether Fansub groups' activities have a positive or negative influence on the spread of US television programs in China, and to generate valuable feedback from Fansub groups' users. Surveys were conducted online. The preferences of US television programs' genre include surreal/whimsical, action, adventure, comedy, crime, drama, historical/historical fiction, horror/thriller, philosophical, political, romance, satire, science fiction, urban, and animation. The possible reactions from using Fansub websites were productive, useful assistance, no special feeling, poor user experience, and useless. The average weekly time spent on

American television programs were never, 1-2 hours, 3-4 hours, 5-7 hours, and over 7 hours. The main source to consume American television programs included Fansub groups, domestic streaming services (Souhu, iQiyi, Youku Tudou, etc.), and television stations (CCTV, Phoenix Television, Shanghai Television, etc.).

The purpose of these interviews was to describe and understand the students' and white-collar worker's motivation and preference in doing Fansubbing. The interviews were conducted both online and face-to-face. The motivations for participating in the Fansub group included English-learning, meeting friends, making money, watching free television series, sense of accomplishment, an act of rebellion, and for amusement.

The completed survey and interview questions and answers are attached (see appendix). To establish validity, all interviewees have at least three months' experience in Fansubbing within the past year; to check its reliability, during the interview, the researcher asked for confirmation from different interviewees about others' answers about the same question to ensure reliability.

3.5 Procedure

The data were collected through the survey and interviews. The survey was conducted online, through multiple Chinese social media such as Weibo, WeChat, QQ and RenRen. The researcher used Chinese online questionnaire software "Wenjuan Wang" to collect data and organize the information.

The survey took about 10 minutes on average to complete. The questions included three sections; personal information, such as gender, age, major/occupation, and English ability. The second section focused on their consumption behavior, how often they watch

American television, what genre they prefer, and what channel was used to access American content. The last section focused on consumer feedback and user experience. Do they consider Fansubbing as a positive or negative factor for Chinese TV industry? Respondents could state their own reasons in the survey.

General personal information:	Gender, age, major/job, and English ability.
Consumption Behavior:	How often do they watch American television series? What genre do they prefer? What channel do they use to get access to American content?
Consumers' feedback:	Describe the user experience? Do they consider Fansubbing as a positive or negative factor for the Chinese television industry?

Table 2. Survey Questions

The interviews were conducted in a coffee shop, in school or through the internet. Each interview was tape-recorded and note-recorded for accuracy. The researcher asked questions of the participants, and received feedback; specific information was repeatedly confirmed.

The duration of each interview was approximately 30 minutes. The general procedures of the interview were very similar, beginning with personal information, then focusing on the Fansub group, in which Fansub group is he/she a participant, what's his/her duty, and how does the Fansub group work. Subsequent questions focused on their feelings about their fansubbing activities. The researcher also asked for opinions about each other's answers, to get confirmation or a diverse answer.

General personal information:	Gender, age, major/job, and English ability.
First-hand Fansub group activities:	In which Fansub group does he/she participate? What are the reasons for them to join a Fansub group, and why do they pick this specific Fansub group? What's his/her duties? How does the Fansub group work? What's the structure? Where do the funds come from? How many products are in production now?
Interviewees' feelings	How do they feel about their job? What changes has Fansub work brought to them? Do they care about the impact (whether good or bad) that fansubbing

	<p>has on the Chinese television industry?</p> <p>Do they act with any specific intent that extends beyond simply making foreign content accessible to Chinese audiences? Or is fansubbing merely an act of cathartic subversion that is (in most cases) consequence free?</p>
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Table 3. Interview Questions

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected were transcribed and categorized according to research questions. Specific questions from the survey and personal interviews were matched to answer their own three question sections. A coding method was used to organize the data collected from the survey and interviews into a limited number of themes and issues. Ethnology method has been used to illustrate consumers' traits in order to study their behaviors. Quotations were selected from the interviewee that well-explained the themes and concepts of the topic. Data collected from the survey were compared with the data from the interview to verify their validity and reliability.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The survey and personal interviews provided a wealth of knowledge for the researcher with regard to the various influences caused by Fansub groups' activities. The survey consists of multiple choice, matrix table, and rank order questions. 1,601 surveys were completed, of which 1,576 were valid. During the personal interview, the researcher allowed the respondent to answer their questions freely and openly but with a guarantee of confidentiality, and led the interview direction based on the respondent's response.

The following tables and charts present the data collected through the survey.

Q1: Gender

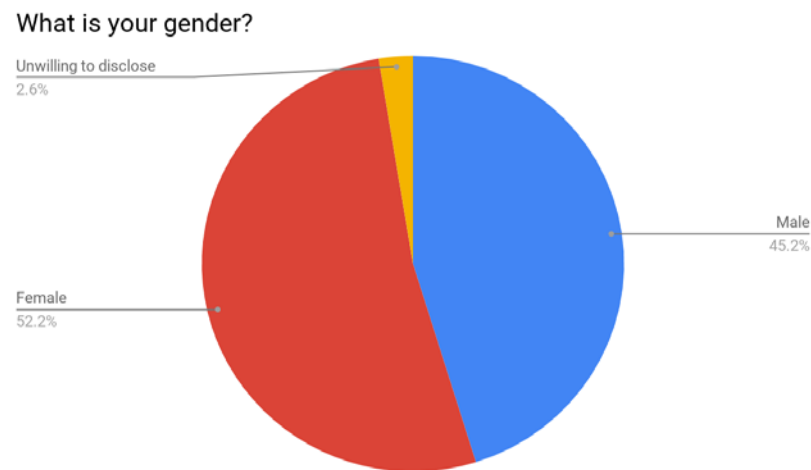


Figure 4. Gender

Of all valid respondent samples, 45.2% were male and 52.2% were female, 2.6% respondents did not want to disclose their gender. The research shows that the proportion of male and female US television programs' audiences is relatively balanced.

Q2: Age

How old are you?

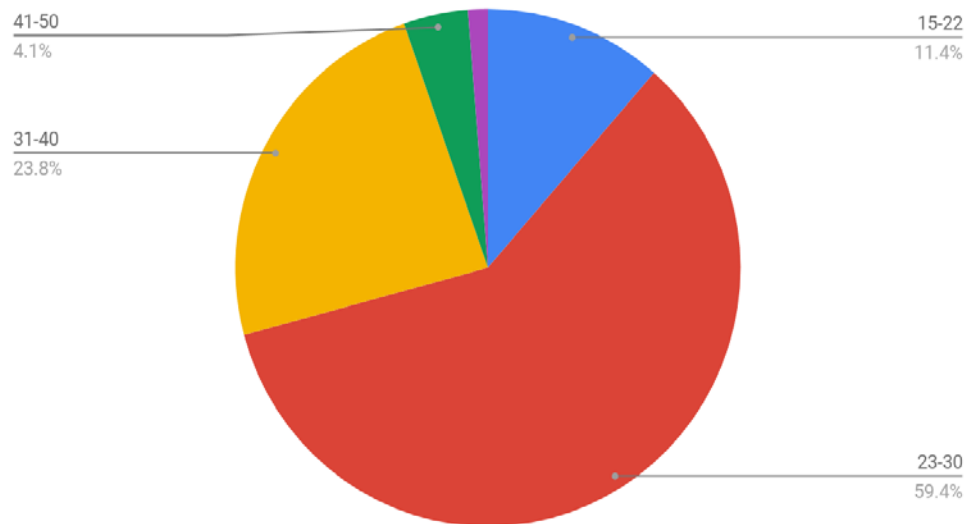


Figure 5. Age

59.4% of all valid respondents were between the ages of 23-30; 15-22 represented 11.4%, 31-40 represented 23.8%, 41-50 represented 4.1% and 51+ represented 1.4%;

Q3: Where are you living currently?

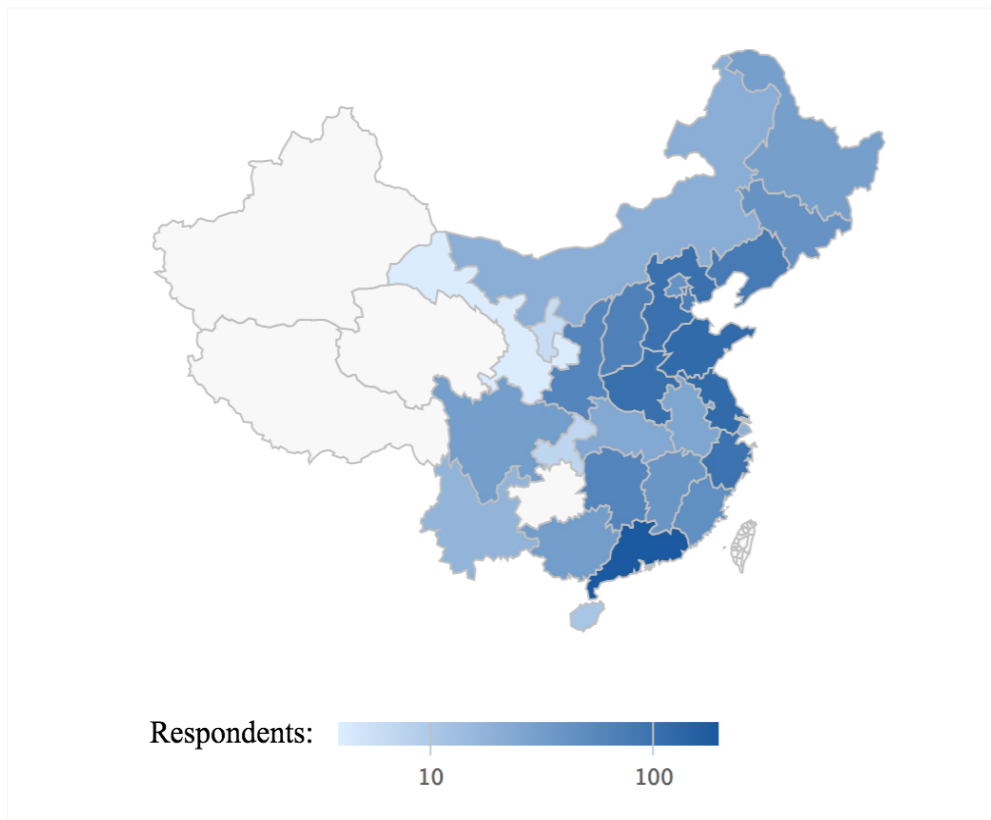


Figure 6. City Map

Where are you living currently?

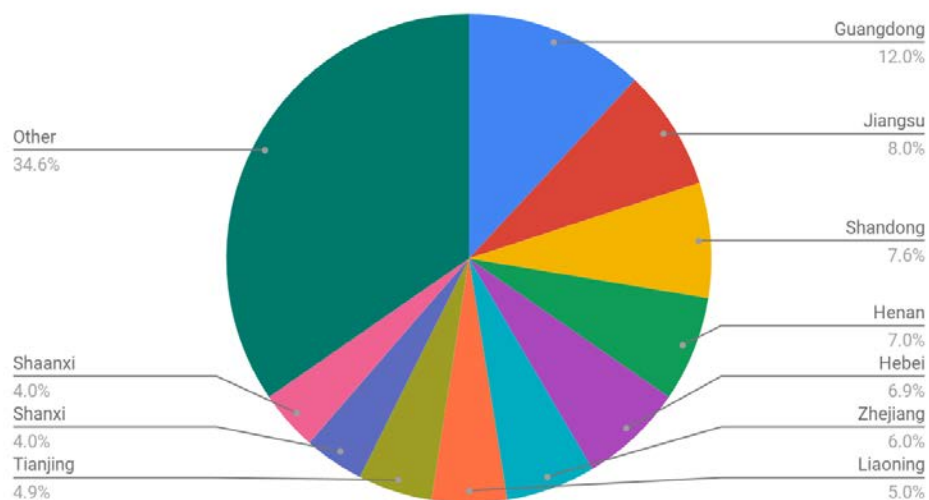


Figure 7. Respondents' Residence

Figures 10 and 11 shows that 12% of respondents are from Guangdong, which is where China's first Fansub group emerged. Most respondents are from coastal cities (Guangdong, Jiangsu, Shandong, Hebei, Zhejiang, Liaoning, Tianjin).

Q4: Education

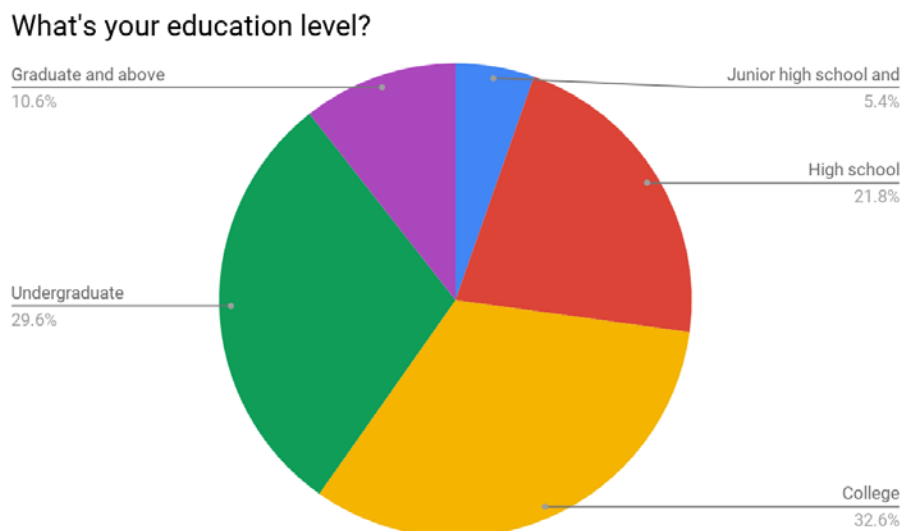


Figure 8. Education Level

The chart shows (irrespective of age) that most of the respondents earned undergraduate (29.6%) or college (32.6%) degrees. Undergraduate students refer to the full-time students with bachelor's degrees; college students refer to those who attend "higher vocational colleges". Higher vocational colleges consist of education in vocational schools and vocational training. Students from higher vocational colleges (full-time and part-time) do not receive a bachelor's degree after they graduate (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2006). 11% had earned graduate or higher degrees. 21.8% of respondents had a high school degree, and 5.4% had only completed primary education. These data match the previous age data, with the majority age group being 23-30 years old, and either in university (undergraduate, graduate), college or just graduated. The connections between data proves the reliability of the results of this research.

Q5: Duration of Employment

How long have you been working?

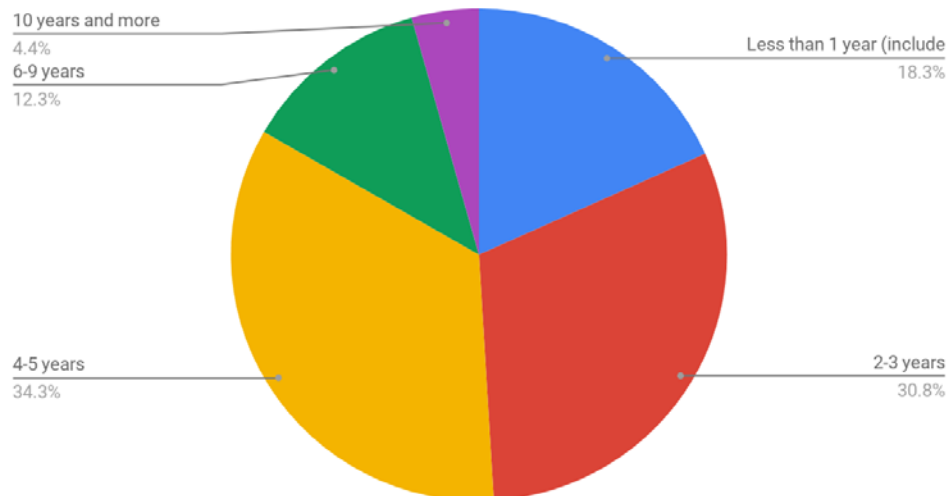


Figure 9. Work Experience

Most of the respondents had either 4-5 (34.3%) or 2-3 years (30.8%) of work experience; 18.3% had less than 1 year work experience, and 12.3% had been working for 6-9 years. Only a few had been working for 10 years or longer (4.4%).

Q6: Monthly Income

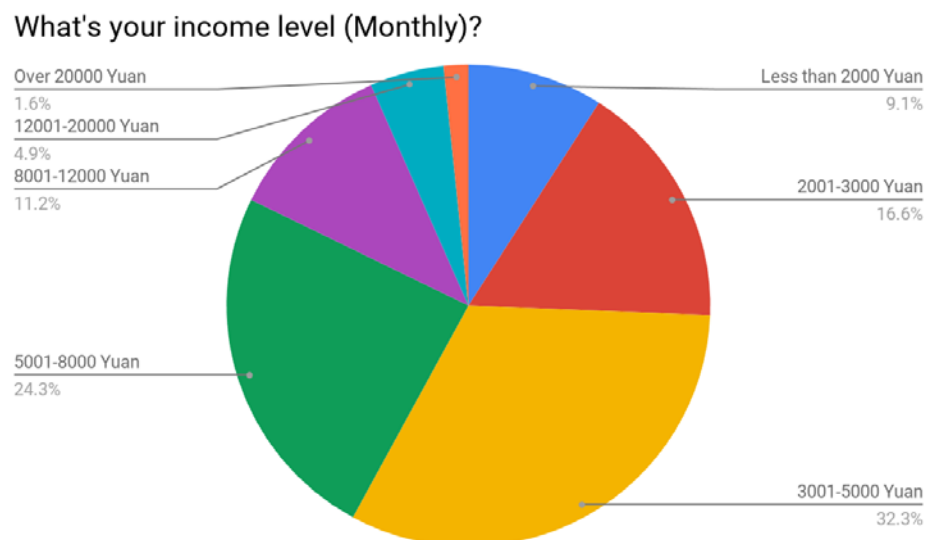


Figure 10. Income Level

9.1% of respondents earned less than 2000 Yuan each month, similar to the percentage of 15-22 years old (11.4%). 58% of respondents earned less than 5000 Yuan monthly, similar to the percentage of people who had less than 3 years of work experience (49.1%). 16% of respondents earned 2001-3000 Yuan per month, with the majority (32.3%) earning 3000-5000 Yuan per month, which is close to the 2016 China's average monthly salary in cities (3500-5600 Yuan per month) (Wang, 2017). 42% of respondents' monthly salary surpassed the national average level (24.3% respondents earned 5001-8000 Yuan each month, 11.2% respondents earned 8001-12000 Yuan per month, 4.9% of respondents earned 12001-20000 Yuan per month, and 1.6% of respondents earned more than 20000 Yuan). Respondents came from higher socioeconomic levels.

Q7: English Proficiency

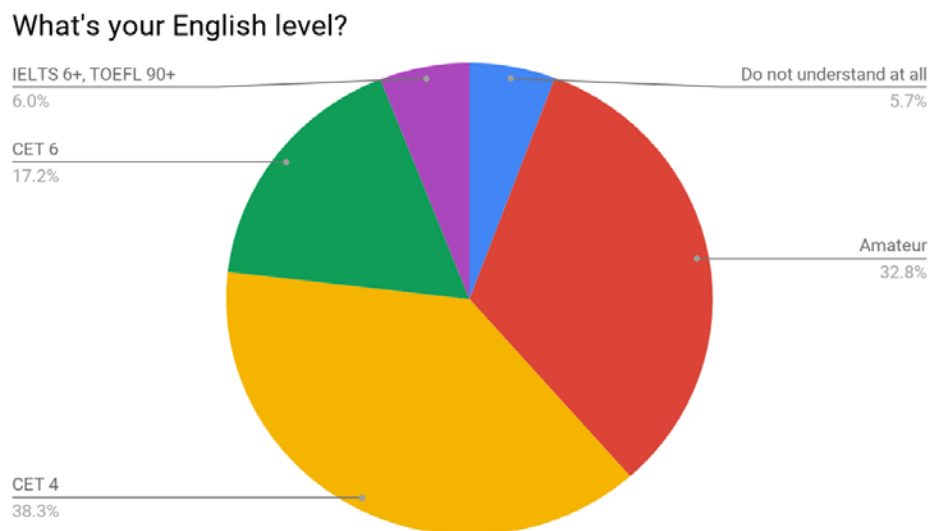


Figure 11. English Level

Most respondents passed the CET 4 (38.3%) examination, which matched with their education level, because normally, graduates from college (Higher vocational college) (32.6%) and undergraduate (29.6%) required CET 4 grades. 10.6% of respondents have graduate and higher degrees, similar to 17.2% of respondents passed CET 6, which is also required by most Chinese graduate schools. 6.0% of respondents have a higher English level, potentially as preparation for overseas travel or study. 32.8% of respondents are English amateurs, and 5.7% percent of respondents don't know English at all.

Q8: Viewing Hours

How many hours do you spend watching American television series per week?

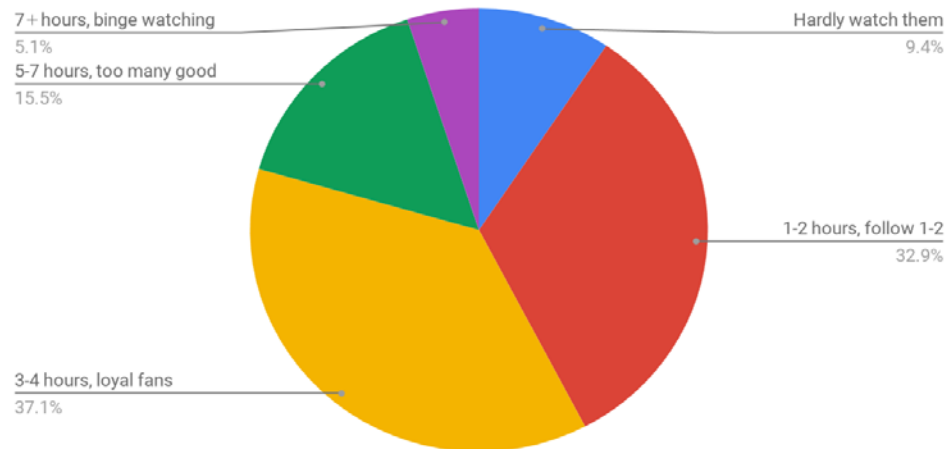


Figure 12. Hour per Week

The data show that most respondents watch American television programs 1-4 hours per week (1-2 hours: 32.9%, 3-4 hours: 37.1%), most are loyal fans of US television series and have a weekly schedule to follow their favorite programs. A considerable proportion (15.5%) of respondents spend 5-7 hours per week watching US television shows, 5.1% of respondents spend more than 7 hours each week not only consuming current on-air shows but also binge viewing previous classic television programs. 9.4% of the respondents hardly watch any American television shows.

Q9: Preferred Genres (Pick top 1-5)

What is (are) your favorite American television genre(s) (Pick your top 1-5)?

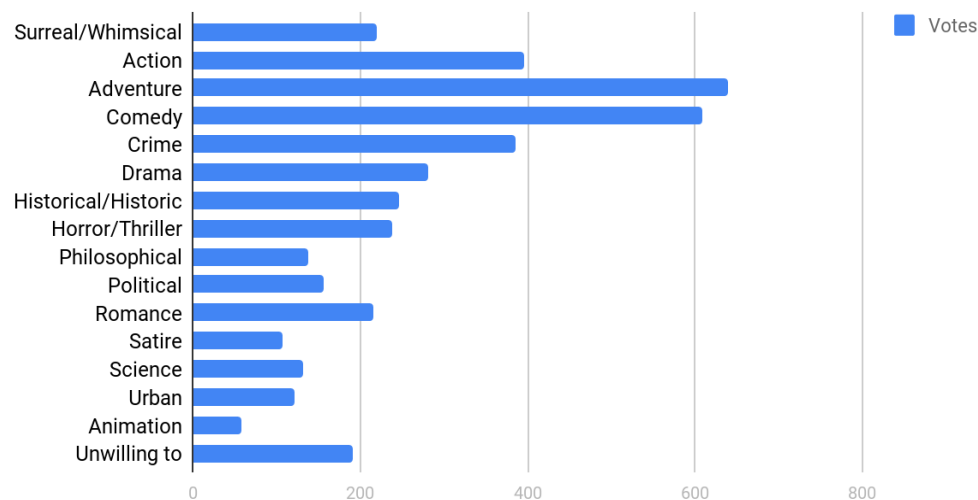


Figure 13. Favorite Genres

Comedy (n=601) and adventure (n=642) are the most popular American television genres, followed by action (n=395) and crime (n=380) themes. Animation is the least favorite US television genre, with 58. Urban (n=121), science (n=131), satire (n=108) and philosophical (n=137) are the genres receiving less than 150 votes.

Q10: Do you agree with the statement “Watching American television programs helps me with my English learning (listening ability, speaking ability, and learning interest).”

Watching American television programs vs. English Learning

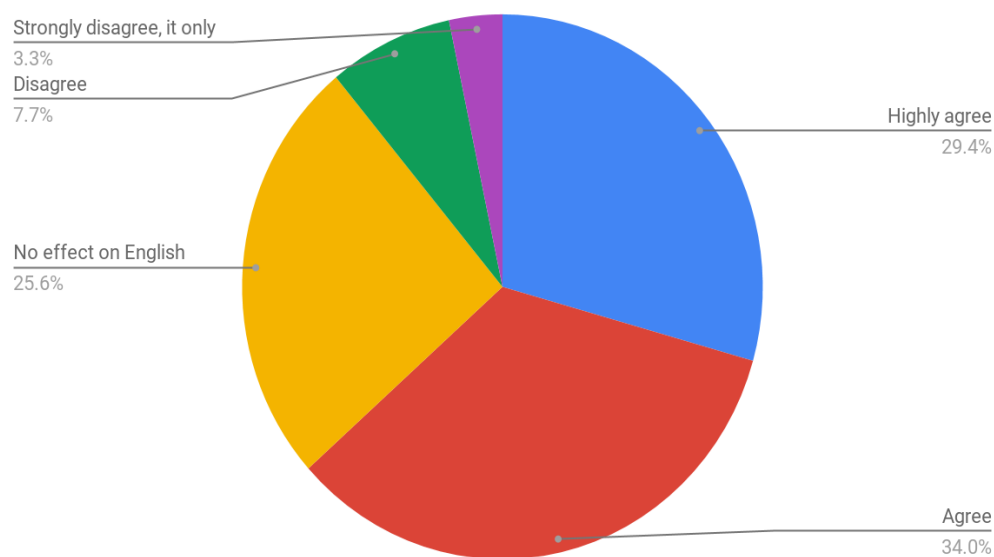


Figure 14. Television and English Learning

63.4% of respondents chose to agree with this statement, and nearly half “highly agree”; 25.6% of respondents thought watching US television programs had no influence on English learning, 7.7% of respondents believed watching American television shows would not help with English study, and another 3.3% of respondents strongly agree.

Q11: Preferred platform for viewing American television programs with 1 as the most frequent, 4 the least:

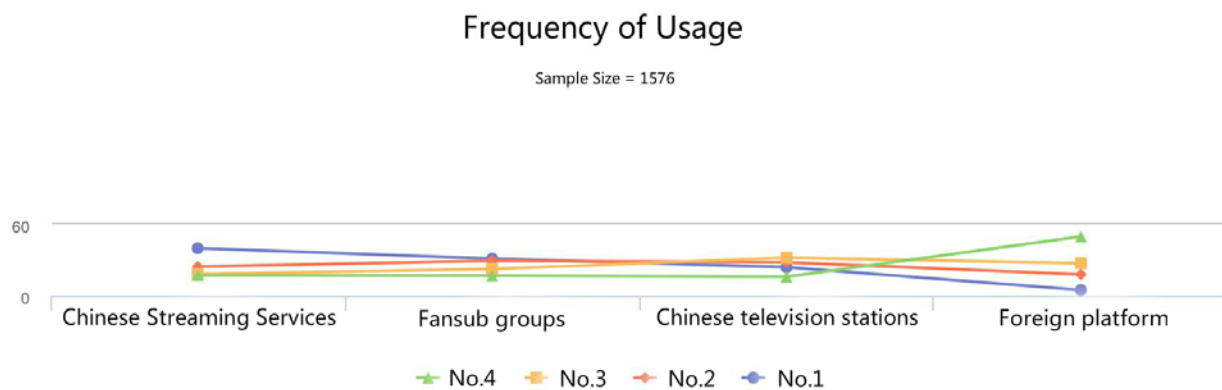


Figure 15. Frequency of Usage

This chart shows some interesting information: although China's streaming services no longer provide live updates of US television programs, they possess a significant number of previously aired shows. That helped streaming services to receive 629 responses for them to be the primary platform for Chinese audiences to consume American television programs. Their average frequency was 2.13. Fansub groups got the most responses for being the second choice (n=464), but Chinese television stations were right behind them (n=441). What these data show is that even though Fansub groups typically provide Chinese viewers greater access to US television products than do Chinese television stations and streaming services, their efforts go largely unnoticed (unacknowledged) due to the fact that these groups choose to keep a low profile. Television stations received the

most responses (n=503) to be the third option for consuming American television programs. Foreign platforms like Hulu and Netflix received 771 responses to be the fourth option to get access to American television series. The average frequency of Fansub groups was 2.24, television stations was 2.41, foreign platforms was 3.21.

Q12: Overall user experience based on resolution, the number of programs available, advertising per episode, and cost.

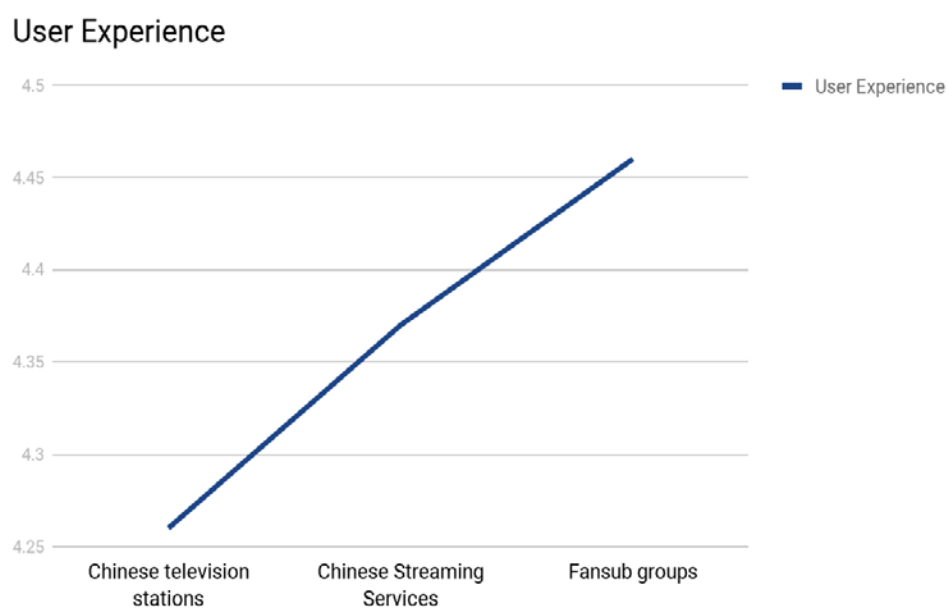


Figure 16. User Experience

Fansub groups provide the best user experience, and Chinese television stations provide the worst user experience. This might be caused by the different levels of interaction and the amount of user-oriented content these platforms can provide. Fansub has the highest

user-content provider interaction level, in fact, the Fansub groups themselves are formed by users. Streaming services have limited user interaction and two-way communication; television stations have a daily schedule for programs, so their interaction with audiences is the least.

Q13: Do you consider the work of Fansub groups (translation and dissemination) to be an infringement of copyright?

Do you consider the work of Fansub groups (translation and dissemination) as an infringement of copyright?

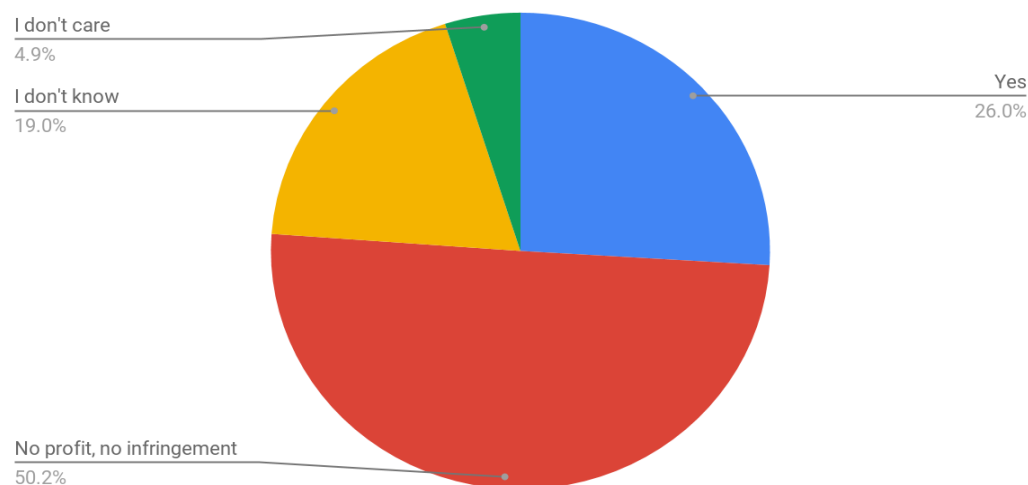


Figure 17. Copyright Infringement

Half of respondents (50.2%) believed that if Fansub groups were not making money through their work, their activities (making copies of videos without permission, translation and distribution of programs) was not considered infringement of copyright.

Only 26.0% of respondents believed that Fansub groups' activities were illegal under any circumstances; 24% of respondents either do not know (19%) or do not care (5%).

Q14: If Fansub groups transform into a formal organization in the Chinese film and television industry, my user experience will be enhanced. Do you agree with this statement?

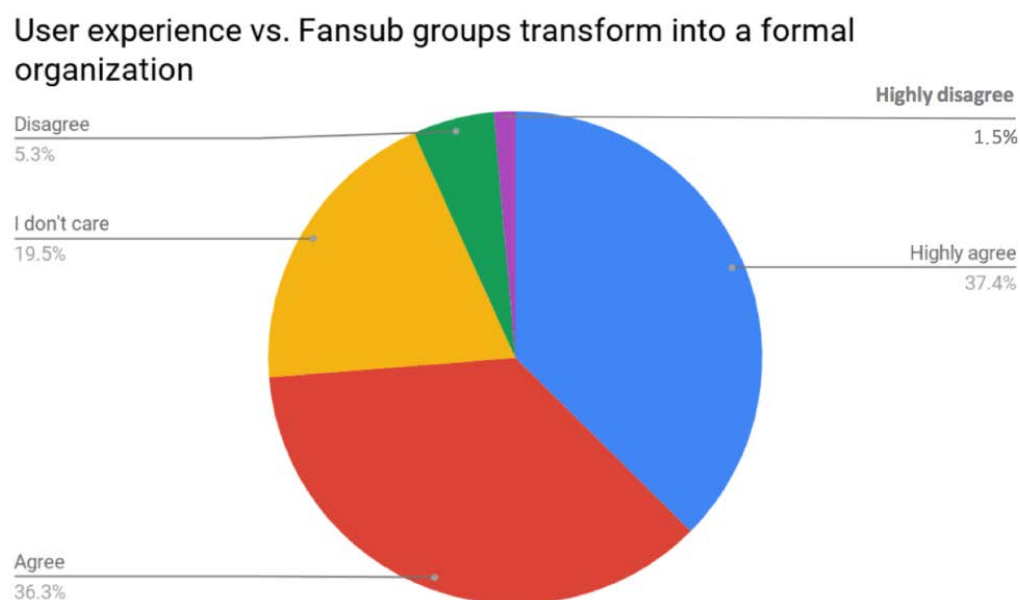


Figure 18. User Experience Change

The table above can be summarized as follows; while 37.4% of respondents “highly agree” with this statement, 36.3% of respondents indicated that they simply “agree”. 19.5% of respondents indicated they “don’t care” about what Fansub groups will become, and only 5.3% of respondents indicated that they “disagreed” with this argument. Another 1.5% of respondents indicated that they “strongly disagreed” with this statement,

and believed that Fansub groups should remain independent and be distinguished from official agencies. It is interesting because during the personal interviews with Fansub participants, most agreed with these 1% of respondents; this result shows how different opinions can be influenced by different respondents' perspectives.

Q15: Fansub groups have significant positive influence on the spread of US programs in China and also have a positive effect on the development of China's television industry (enhancing competition, improving audience appreciation ability, etc.). Do you agree with this statement?

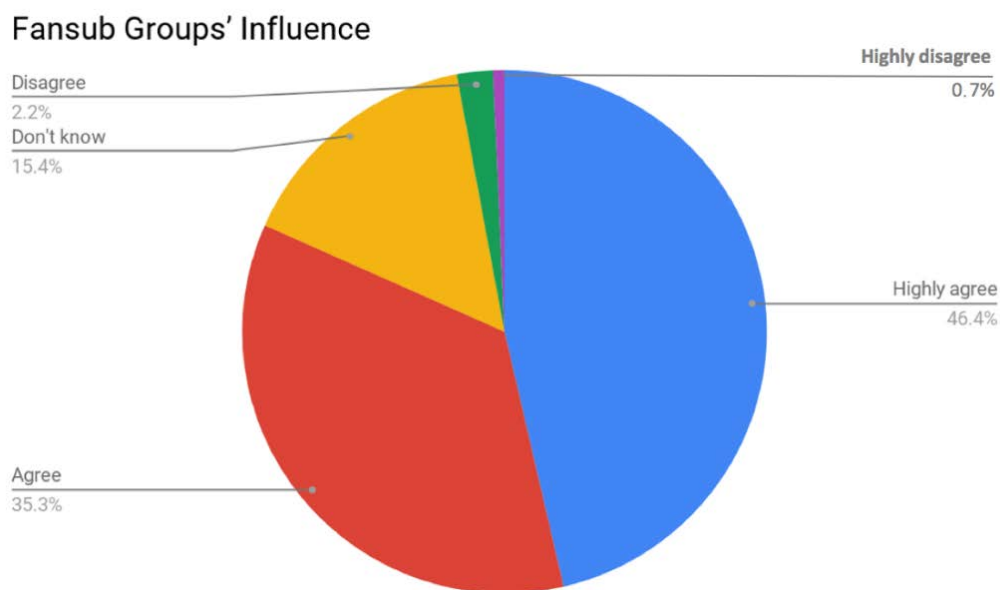


Figure 19. Fansub Groups' Influence

The “Highly agree” and “Agree” proportion reached 82% of all respondents; 14% of respondents don't have an idea what kind of impact Fansub will cause for the Chinese

television industry, 3% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with this argument.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

China and the United States are both countries with rich cultures; cross-cultural communication between these two has been going on for a long time, through various media. With the help of Fansub groups, television programs and other audiovisual products became an important communication bridge between the US and China. The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the influences of US television programs on Chinese viewers, the Chinese television industry and Chinese society as a whole.

5.2 Discussion

Based on the literature review and research, the researcher divided the discussion into four sections: the first section examines the role of television programs in US-China cross-cultural communication. The second section analyzes the Fansub groups' specific working process. The third section discussed the roles Fansub groups play in the spread of US television programs in China at their current (2017-2018) stage. In the last section, the possible future development of Fansub groups has been addressed.

Television programs' role in cross-cultural communication

The thesis has proven that television and other audio-visual products have a huge impact on viewers' lifestyles and viewing habits. An influential US television show (*Garrison's Gorillas*, *Man From Atlantis*, *Friends*, *Growing Pains*, *Prison Break*, *House*

of *Cards*, etc.) could have a significant impact on the Chinese television industry, affecting the choice of theme, production structure, and distribution model.

Fansub Groups' Workflow

Fansub groups began in the 2000's and have a tight relationship with technological and economic factors. This section will discuss Fansub groups' production processes in two aspects: first, Fansub groups' organizational structure and workflow, including the different subgroups Fansub groups contain, and their daily routines. The second aspect is the different formation of Fan-subtitles: how they are consumed, and how they look.



Figure 20. Screenshots from Breaking Bad, S05E07, translated by YYeTs.com

Fansub Group Organizational Structure and Workflow

A Fansub group has a clear division of labor, which makes their work very efficient. Different Fansub groups might have different divisions of labor, but the basic operational concepts are similar. Based on information obtained during personal interviews, the author classified Fansub groups' working procedures into 6 steps: obtain raw video, adjust timeline, translation, proofreading, special effects and encoding, and distribution. It should be noted that these six steps are not necessarily done by different people. If a person has sufficient time and mastered the necessary technologies, one Fansubber can have multiple-jobs. This may slow the speed of Fansub production, but it can also improve the consistency and accuracy of the Fan-subtitles. The following information related to the Fansub production process and timetable was generated through several personal interviews, organized by the researcher.

AMC's *The Walking Dead* is an example. *The Walking Dead* season 8 episode 5 was broadcast on 9:00 pm EST, November 19, 2017, which was 10:00 am, November 20, 2017 Beijing time. The first step to produce a Fansub for *The Walking Dead* is to get the raw video of this show. Due to the "Notice of Further Implementation of the Online Foreign Film and Television Play Administrative Regulations by SAPPPFT" in 2014. Chinese citizens cannot get access to this raw video, which can only be captured by people overseas. Americans can use a computer component called a "television tuner card", which anyone can buy online or in a computer store. This computer component allows television signals to be received by a computer, and also enables the computer to capture video. Through this process, the raw video of this episode of *The Walking Dead*

is quickly obtained from Americans who transmit the raw video to Fansubbers in China via the internet.

The second step is a timeline adjustment. Most Fansub works are based on an important component: the CC (Closed captioning) subtitles. CC subtitles are English subtitles, provided by production companies in order to help hearing-impaired people and provide additional or interpretive information (Tian, 2011). CC subtitles can help Fansub groups save significant time in translating and producing the timeline. If there are no CC subtitles, Fansubbers will have to translate the dialogue based on their English knowledge, which can cause more errors and misunderstanding than using CC subtitles. With the help of CC subtitles, Fansubbers only need to remove the commercials or other interference in the original video footage, and match the timeline for the translation team. The timeline adjustment process for *The Walking Dead*, Season 8 episode 5 was finished before 12:00 am, Beijing time (11:00 pm, EST, 2017).

The third step is translation. Considering that *The Walking Dead* is one of the most popular shows in China, 5 translators were assigned. Each translated around 100 lines. The translation process took 3 hours to complete (3:00 pm, Beijing time/2:00 am, EST).

The next step is proofreading. The main tasks in proofreading include text correction, making sure there are no grammatical errors or mistranslations and maintaining a consistent tone. Fansubbers have to make sure that audiences won't feel fragmented while watching their content. Additionally, proofreading will examine the format of the subtitles and keep it as short and clear as possible. The proofreading for *The Walking Dead* took 1 hour to finish (4:00 pm, Beijing time/3:00 am, EST).

After translation and proofreading are completed, this episode of *The Walking Dead* entered the special effects and encoding process.

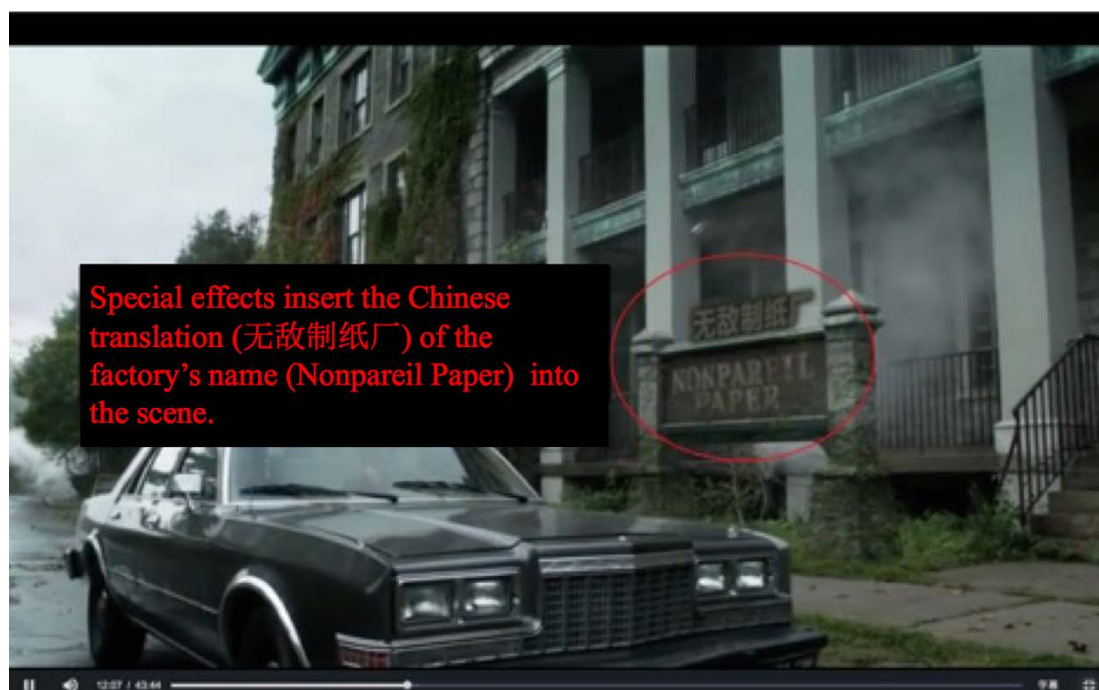


Figure 21. Screenshot from Gotham, S04E09, translated by YYeTs.com

The special effects include the way subtitles appear on-screen, their color, integration with the scene, with the primary goal being to make the show understandable without excessive interruptions. After the special effects, the subtitles were encoded into the given episode, and a separate version of Fan-subtitles will be released later after a second round of elaborate proofreading.

The final step in Fansubbing is distribution. After the encoding process, Fansubbers uploaded *The Walking Dead* season 8 episode 5 to their website, which provides options to watch this episode online, or download this episode in many different formats (MP4, HDTV, 720P, 1080P, and WEB-DL). Each of these options has more sub-options containing different links to this episode, because it is not safe to put their works

all in one channel. Normally, a short time after they upload the video, several links from the sub-options will be disabled or deleted by government internet regulators. Aside from having multiple links, Fansub groups also use an alias to avoid censorship. For example, Fansub groups will rename “*The Walking Dead* season 8 episode 5” as “TWD s8e5”, “Dead s8Ee5” or sometime, simply “5. mkv”. The encoding and distribution took approximately 1 and a half hours for this episode of *The Walking Dead* (5:30 pm, Beijing time/4:30 am, EST).

The speed of the Fansub production process depends on the popularity of the show. The Fansub “reproduction” process of this episode of *The Walking Dead* only took 7.5 hours to complete, indicating that most hit shows can be produced by Fansub groups within the same day the show is first released in the US.

Formation of Fansub:

According to personal interviews, there are two kinds of Fan-subtitles: Embedded Subtitles and Add-on Subtitles. Embedded Subtitles is defined as subtitles that are encoded into the video and cannot be separated; Add-on Subtitles refers to Fan-subtitles that are in a separate file that needs to be superimposed onto the original audio-visual products before being consumed. Regardless of which method is used, the name of the Fansub group, the name (or alias) of translators and other Fansubbers will appear at the beginning of the video.



Figure 22. Screenshot from How to Get Away With Murder, S04E07, translated by YYeTs.com



Figure 23. Screenshot from How to Get Away With Murder, S04E07, translated by YYeTs.com

Normally, Embedded Subtitles will be released first, due to two considerations:
first, different Fansub groups compete with each other on the speed of production;

Embedded Subtitles can prevent plagiarism and misappropriation from other competing groups. Secondly, different Fansub groups also fight for audiences, and Embedded Subtitles are more convenient to download and consume than Add-on Subtitles. When the competition of “who translates first” is over, the “precise proofread” version of Embedded and Add-on Subtitles will be released.

Based on the display of subtitles, the researcher divided Fansubs into two categories: Monolingual Fansubs and Bilingual Fansubs. Bilingual Fansubs are more commonly used by large Fansub groups, because they have the labor to do both Chinese and English subtitles. The use of Monolingual Fansubs has become less and less; this method is more often used by small Fansub groups, or by individuals. Monolingual Fansub is mostly used in Fansubbing short videos, explanatory text of dialogues in the video or used to gain a competitive advantage in “who translates first” for small Fansub groups to get more viewers.



Figure 24. Screenshot from The Big Bang Theory, S11E06, translated by YYeTs.com

During personal interviews, all respondents mentioned the importance of the translation format. There are several vital factors; first is the subtitle space. The size of the screen is limited and can usually only accommodate up to two lines of subtitles with each line containing 12-14 Chinese words. Translators should make both lines of subtitles as short as possible in order to give audiences the best possible viewing experience. The second factor is the use of words in subtitles. Audiences have limited time and attention to subtitles while viewing video content, which makes the best subtitles single-line translations, composed of simple words that are easily understood by viewers.

Following is a list of Fansub groups' translation notes:

1. Punctuation marks: Only English half-width double quotes, ellipses can be used in Chinese subtitles.
2. Dialogue from different characters must be led by “-”.
3. Different characters' dialogue must be separated by 2 spaces; same character's dialogue must be separated by 1 spaces.

4. The translation of English names must be accurate.
5. If a timeline is composed only of nonverbal utterances (fillers like “ahh” or “uhh”, delete that timeline.
6. Simplify the translations as much as possible, delete unnecessary sentences.
7. Use simple sentences, save space (eg.: translate “30 thousand” to “3万” rather than “30000”, translate “year 1969” into “1969年” instead of “一九六九年 ”).
8. Considering the text strokes of Chinese language, choose words with the least strokes to translate (eg.: translate “ghost” into “鬼” instead of “幽灵” or “鬼魅 ”).

Following is an example of a typical work sheet of Fansub groups’ translation work:

52
00:02:36,062 --> 00:02:38,363
或者我在早饭前发明了肌萎缩侧索硬化症的疫苗
or that I found a vaccine for ALS before breakfast. ← Timeline

53
00:02:38,398 --> 00:02:40,032
那会很好 一切都会好的 ← Chinese Dialogue displayed in the video
That'd be great. Anything would be great.

54
00:02:40,066 --> 00:02:41,299
-你又来了 -什么
- There it is again. - What? ← English Dialogue displayed in the video

55 ← Dialogue number
00:02:41,334 --> 00:02:43,168
你在等着我偿还
You're waiting for me to pay up

56
00:02:43,202 --> 00:02:46,071 ← Timeline
你为这个家庭做出的巨大的牺牲
for this grand sacrifice that you made for our family.

Figure 25. Sample Fansub Groups’ Worksheet

Fansub Groups' Role in the Spread of US Television Programs in China (2015-2018) and Associated Legal Issues

Based on the results of the survey and personal interviews, Fansub has become the second most commonly used source for Chinese people to get access to US television programs, and most users are well educated (75% respondents have college, undergraduate or graduate degree) with high incomes (42% respondents' income levels surpass the national average). Fansub groups have the leading user experience among all three platforms including television stations, and streaming services. 82% of respondents believe that Fansub groups' activities have a significantly positive influence on the spread of US programs in China and also have a positive effect on enhancing competition, improving audience appreciation, and providing useful references for the theme and topic of Chinese television programs.

Personal interviews reveal that most participants in Fansub groups volunteered to do their jobs with no financial return; their purpose in being a Fansubber are achieving self-worth, improving their English skills, and meeting new friends. They consider Fansubbing a hobby rather than a job. On the topic of whether Fansubbing is illegal or not, surprisingly, five out of six interviewees think Fansubbing is not an infringement of copyright. All interviewees admitted that there is something "wrong" about their Fansubbing work, but it's not as serious as breaking copyright law. 50% of the survey respondents believe Fansub groups' work is not "illegal", 19% don't know if it's infringement or not, 5% don't care, and only 26% respondents think Fansub groups' activities breaks copyright law.

In the “Regulations for the Implementation of the Copyright Law of the People's Republic of China” (1991), there are two articles related to Fansub groups’ activities:

Article 2. The term “works” used in the Copyright Law refers to original intellectual creations in the literary, artistic and scientific domain, in so far as they are capable of being reproduced in a certain tangible form.

Article 10. Persons who have glossed or sorted-out preexisting works shall enjoy the copyright in the works thus created, in so far as they are not entitled to copyright in the works they used and do not have the right to prohibit the glossing or sorting-out done by other person in relation to the same pre-existing work.

According to these legal provisions, Fansub groups’ activities are without permission from the copyright owners; they only have the copyright of the Chinese version of subtitles -- “glossed or sorted-out preexisting works”. Judging from the above relevant copyright law, it is undisputed that Fansub groups’ activities are infringement of copyright (Lou, 2016).

However, the legal issues have become more complicated than before. The “*Regulation for the Implementation of the Copyright Law of the People's Republic of China* (2013 Revision)” made several changes to Chinese copyright law; article 2 remains the same, but article 10 has been deleted. The legal provisions about the creation of Fansub groups have become blurred.

China became a member of the Berne Convention in October 15, 1992 (“WIPO-Administered”, n.d.). The Berne Convention has several articles related to the “infringement” activities of Fansub groups:

Article 3. Criteria of Eligibility for Protection: 1. Nationality of author; place of publication of work; 2. Residence of author; 3. “Published” works; 4. “Simultaneously published” works.

Article 15. Right to Enforce Protected Rights: 1. Where author's name is indicated or where pseudonym leaves no doubt as to author's identity; 2. In the case of cinematographic works; 3. In the case of anonymous or pseudonymous works; 4. In the case of certain unpublished works of unknown authorship.

Article 16. Infringing Copies: 1. Seizure; 2. Seizure on importation; 3. Applicable law.

Based on these articles, Fansub groups’ work is no doubt infringement of copyright and should be eliminated and confiscated by the government. Copyright law of the United States, title 17, chapter 1, § 107, mentions some exceptions that do not constitute infringement of copyright called “fair use”; it states:

The fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be

considered shall include—

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work (17 U.S. Code, 1979).

According to these four factors, if Fansub groups' activities are not authorized by the copyright owner (most likely), then public sharing and distributing of these unauthorized contents is difficult to apply to the "fair use" exemption, especially because some Fansub groups' works include advertising, proving that they have a profit-making purpose. Some Fansub groups put a "legal disclaimer" at the beginning of a film or television program, often resembling the example reproduced and translated below.

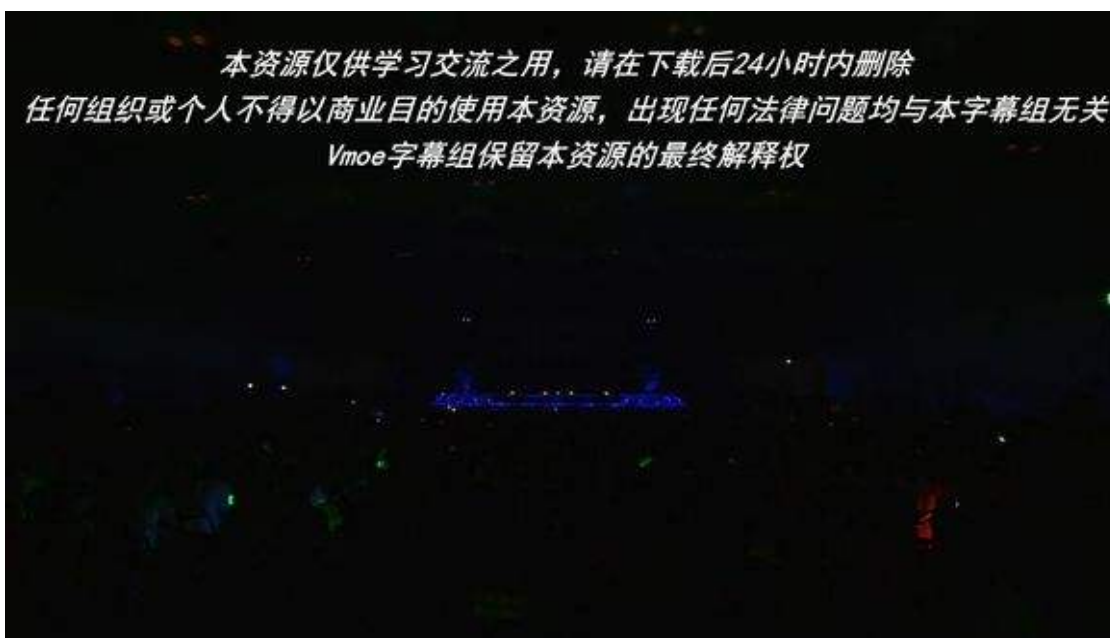


Figure 26. Fansub groups' Legal Disclaimer, Vmoe Subtitle Group

This work's source, subtitles are from the internet, only used for personal entertainment and learning purposes, the copyright belongs to the publishing company, any organization or individual shall not publicly disseminate or use it for any commercial profit purposes, or all the consequences shall be commitment by themselves. This website and producers of these Fan-subtitles do not assume any legal and joint responsibilities! Please delete this film within 24 hours after downloading, if you like this film, please buy authorized edition.

According to Bo Yuan (2017), a judge in Shanghai Second Intermediate People's Court, this disclaimer attempts to make Fansub groups' work fit the "fair use" term, but it has no legal effect at all. Requiring users to delete the video within 24 hours is an empty promise. The disclaimer still cannot change the fact that Fansub groups' activities are violations of copyright law.

If Fansub groups only produce “add-in” Fan-subtitles, the “infringement of copyright” problem depends on different circumstances. There is no specific law that claims people cannot create subtitles by themselves, therefore Fansubbing itself is not a crime. Conversely, subtitles are part of the original audio-visual works, subject to copyright, which includes the right to translate. If Fansub groups use CC subtitles or any other subtitles not produced by Fansub groups themselves, it is an infringement of copyright. However, Fansub translation and sharing is relatively easier to interpret as “fair use” for personal learning or research, but the significant amount of downloading of these “add-in” subtitles makes it hard to interpret as “fair use”. Copyright owners direct most of their efforts toward cracking down on pirate video sources and have a higher tolerance for subtitling piracy (Wang, 2012).

From a potential market point of view, Fansub groups’ work do have a significant promotional effect on the spread and popularity of American television programs in China, as many series become popular even before they were on air due to the pre-publicity of Fansub groups (Lou, 2016).

In conclusion, Fansub groups played a positive role during the spread of US television programs in China, linking US television programs with Chinese audiences, especially since 2015 (*“The Notice of Further Implementation of the Online Foreign Film and Television Play Administrative Regulations”*). Fansub groups became an important means to break the isolation between the Chinese and American television industries. Based on Chinese copyright law, the Berne Convention and copyright law of the United States, Fansub groups’ activities are an infringement of copyright under most

circumstances. Fansub groups are like a small window that allows people to release dissatisfaction of life through a minor form of misdemeanor.

The Possible Future of Fansub Groups in China

The survey and personal interviews provide different feedback on this topic. 74 % of survey respondents think that if Fansub groups transform into formal organizations in the Chinese film and television industry, their user experience will be enhanced. Only 6% of respondents disagree and believe Fansub groups should remain independent. But in personal interviews, all six interviewees state that they didn't want Fansub groups under government control or ownership. A divided opinion between Fansub groups' users and their practitioners brings more uncertainty to the future direction of Fansub groups. Based on the results of the survey and personal interviews, the researcher proposes several possible future outcomes for Fansub groups in China.

Becoming Regulated

The most essential question about the regulation of Fansub groups by the government is, would they still be "Fan"-subtitled groups? Most Fansub group participants argue that if Fansub groups are regulated by government, they will become something else other than "Fansub groups", because there will be no more pure fans' subtitling. Regulation and legalization of the Fansub industry might destroy the spirit of non-conformity that makes it attractive to much of its community. This is the main reason all the interviewees reject regulation, after all, fans' subtitling is the core of Fansubbing.

But if Fansub groups are eventually regulated, what will they become? There are three possibilities: Incorporated into some existing government agencies, become a brand-new government control organization, or several independent streaming services.

Most of the interviewees chose the last option. Letting Fansub groups form their own business is the best result they can expect under the regulation of government. If Fansub groups want to become independent streaming services, the first problem needing resolution is the copyright issue. If their “subtitling” activities become official businesses, Fansub groups need to deal with all legal issues previously detailed in this thesis. There is a solution; compared to expensive copyright compensation for video, Fansub groups can focus on creating subtitles. The copyright fees of CC subtitles or other original subtitles provided by production companies can be much cheaper. Fansub groups can switch their focus to “add-in” subtitles. If Fansub groups can form a cooperative relationship with video content providers, the original subtitles can be free.

The above argument has a limitation: the policy of 2015 (*Circular of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television on Further Implementing the Relevant Provisions on the Administration of Overseas Television and Television Plans*) limited the amount and time to import US television programs. Being an independent streaming services can hardly resolve this kind of policy issue. If Fansub groups were incorporated into some existing government agencies, or even formed into a brand-new government control organization, they would have more influence in policy issues. August First Film Studio, Changchun Film Group Corporation, China Film Co.,Ltd., and Shanghai Film Translation Studio are the most likely government agencies Fansub groups would be able to incorporate with. These government-owned companies are lacking both in-service and full-time translators; Fansub groups’ resources can be of benefit to them (“Subtitles For”, 2015). If Fansub groups become a brand-new government control organization, it is also an excellent complement to the Chinese translation industry. The new organization could

launch translation training courses, to accelerate the transformation process from fan's translation to professional translation.

Not Being Regulated:

There are other possibilities for Fansub groups other than being regulated by government. For instance, they could remain the same as they are now. Stay underground, “almost” non-profit, made by fans, driven by interest. Under loose policy circumstances, they produce Fan-subtitled videos faster, in higher quantities; under strict policy control, they keep changing their websites' URL's and maintain a presence.

There is also a possibility that Fansub groups will disappear in the future. This can be caused by two factors: first, more relaxed policy restrictions on introducing US television programs can bring back the era of streaming services. While Soho, Tencent, iQiyi or other streaming services provide up-to-date American series, fewer people will bother to search for BitTorrent on a Fansub website. Viewing American television programs from official streaming services is more convenient and more efficient, without the need to worry about legal issues. The other thing that can lead to the disappearance Fansub groups is a stricter policy environment. YYeTs Fansub is still active even after being confiscated by the authorities several times (Teng, 2014). They can change a server, get a new domain name and start over. But if the Chinese government decides to strictly enforce policy on copyright laws and their policies, Fansub groups can't last long.

Limitations

Although the survey and personal interviews have illustrated the effects of Fansub groups on Chinese viewers, there were several limitations to the study. The first limitation was related to samples and sample size. The authenticity of the data collected from the survey can hardly be verified, since participants were randomly picked from Chinese social media. Only 6 personal interviews were conducted, and most of them were from the same Fansub group. The diversity and range of the sample is not broad enough. Other limitations were related to the research method. A survey and several personal-interview were conducted during the research, but a participant-observer study can be more useful. Most of the data in this research were secondary data, therefore the accuracy, although conducted by multi-party comparison and careful review by the researcher, still contains possibilities for errors. Furthermore, restricted by the research period and research materials, this study only discusses the impact of Fansub activities on Chinese society and television industry, but not the impact on the US television industry. The above limits affect the internal validity of the results—with a greater number and more diversified respondents, a two or three months' participant-observer study, and a longer study period and more research materials, the results may have more accurately reflected the impact of the Fansub group.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of the study, there are several recommendations for future research. First, expand the scope of the research; do not limit to one or two Fansub groups, but extend the survey to all major Fansub groups, and have one-on-one

interviews with the founders of each group. Secondly, the researcher could join a Fansub group and participate in several Fansub tasks; it would help the researcher understand the structure and workflow of the group, and express the efforts more accurately. Also, an insider's perspective could help the researcher to further interpret the social impact caused by Fansub group activities. Finally, a two-way study can make this research more comprehensive. In what way has China affected the production of US television series? Will American television producers consider Chinese audience's preferences as a considerable factor while shooting television shows? And is there any interaction between Fansub groups and US program makers? These are all questions worthy of further study.

Conclusion

Four major conclusions can be drawn from this research. The first conclusion is that US television programs have had a significant impact on Chinese viewers, Chinese society and the Chinese television industry. The second conclusion is that the emergence of Fansub groups have been driven by technology and economic development; Fansub groups are highly structured and very efficient. The third conclusion is that Fansub groups are continuing play an important role in the spread of US television programs in China, despite the fact that Fansub group activities are more likely to be illegal. The last conclusion is that the future of Fansub groups is highly dependent on government policies, being regulated or not, maintaining their existence or disappearing.

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APPENDICES A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1.What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Unwilling to disclose

2.How old are you?

- ☐ 15-22
- ☐ 23-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51+

3.Which city are you currently live in?

4.What's your education level?

- ☐ Junior high school and below
- ☐ High school
- ☐ College

- Undergraduate
- Graduate and above

5.How long have you been working?

- Less than 1 year (include students never worked before)
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6-9 years
- 10 years and more

6.What's your income level (monthly)?

- Less than 2000 Yuan (include students don't have income)
- 2001-3000 Yuan
- 3001-5000 Yuan
- 5001-8000 Yuan
- 8001-12000 Yuan
- 12001-20000 Yuan
- More than 20000 Yuan

7.What's your English level?

- Do not understand at all
- Amateur

- CET 4
- CET 6
- IELTS 6+, TOEFL 90+

8. How many hours do you spend on watching American television series per week?

- Hardly watch them
- 1-2 hours, follow 1-2 favorite shows
- 3-4 hours, loyal fans
- 5-7 hours, too many good shows!
- 7+ hours, binge watching time!

9. What's your favorite American television genre (Pick top 3)?

- ☐ Surreal/Whimsical
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Adventure
- ☐ Comedy
- ☐ Crime
- ☐ Drama
- ☐ Historical/Historical fiction
- ☐ Horror/Thriller
- ☐ Philosophical
- ☐ Political

- ☐ Romance
- ☐ Satire
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Animation
- ☐ Unwilling to disclose

10. Watching American television programs helps me with my English learning (listening ability, speaking ability, and learning interest). What do you think about this statement?

- ☐ Highly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Watching American television has nothing to do with English learning
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree, it only has influence on English learning

11. According to your frequency of use, please arrange the following American television programs broadcasting platform in order, 1 is the most frequent, 4 is the least used:

_____ Chinese Streaming Services (Sohu, Tencent, iQiyi, etc.)

_____ Fansub groups (YYeTs, FIX, RagBear, etc.)

_____ Chinese television stations (CCTV, Shanghai station, etc.)

_____ Foreign platform (Netflix, Hulu, CBS, NBC, etc.)

12. According to your own experience, how good user experience are these platforms provide? 5 stars is the best, 1 star is the worst.

- a. Chinese television stations (CCTV, Shanghai station, etc.)
- b. Chinese Streaming Services (Sohu, Tencent, iQiyi, etc.)
- c. Fansub groups (YYeTs, FIX, RagBear, etc.)

13. Do you consider the work of Fansub groups (translation and dissemination) as an infringement of copyright?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No profit, no infringement
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ I don't care

14. If Fansub groups transform into a formal organization in the Chinese film and television industry, my user experience with their audio-visual products will also be enhanced. Do you agree with this statement?

- ☐ Highly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ I don't care
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree, it should remain independent

15. Fansub groups have significant positive influence on the spread of the US programs in China and also have a positive effect on the development of Chinas television industry (enhancing competition, improving audience appreciation ability, etc.). Do you agree with this statement?

- ☐ Highly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Dont know
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree